



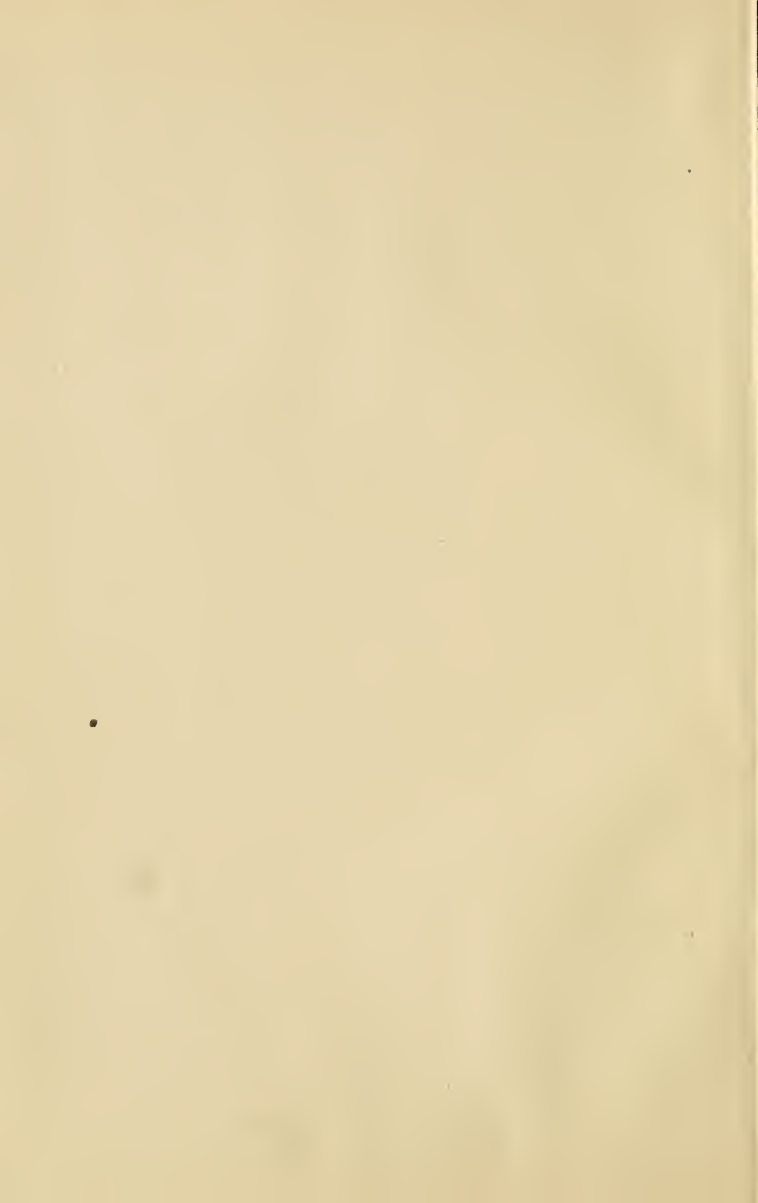


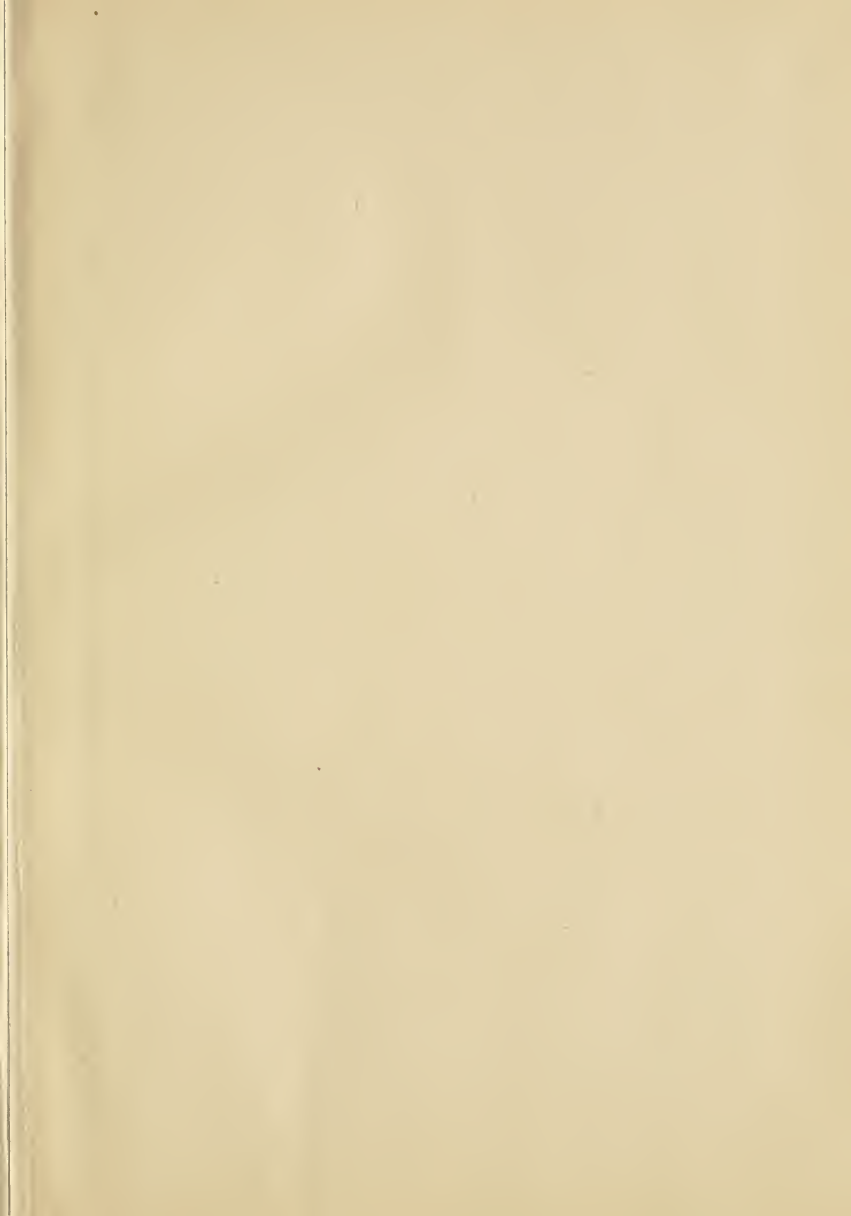
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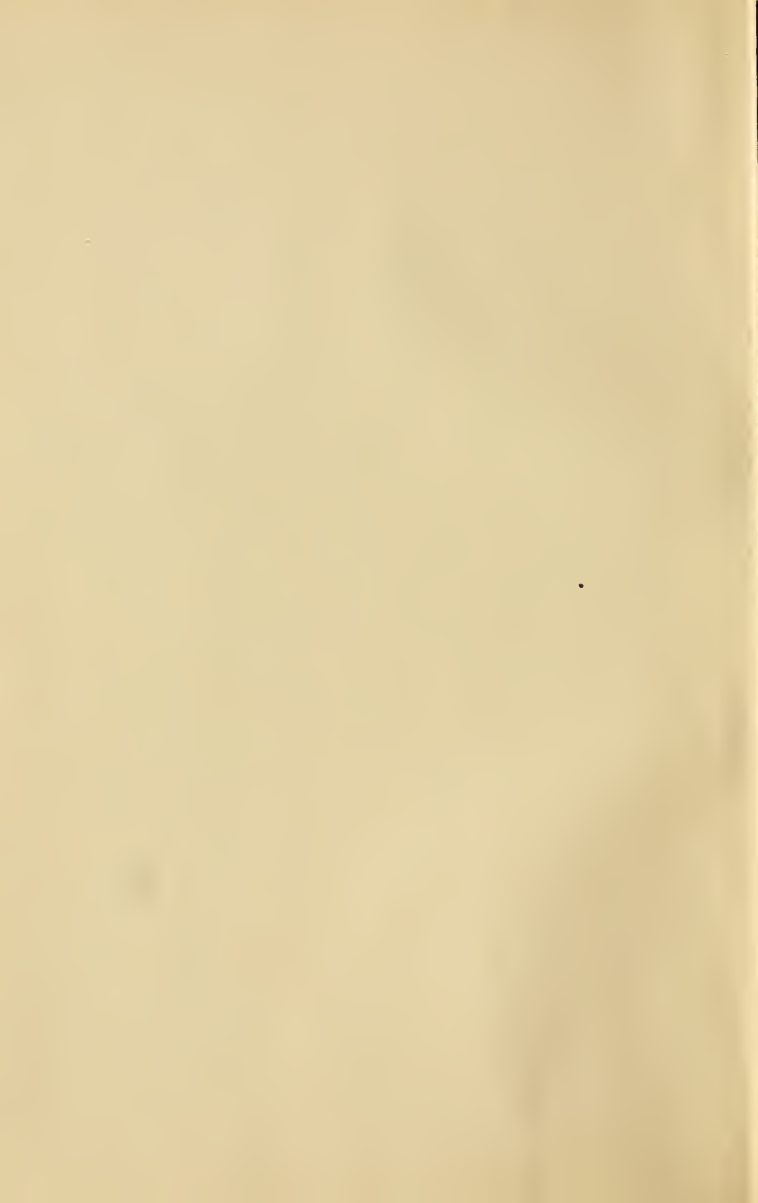
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OLD TIMES  
ON  
Portland Prairie

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1851-1880

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LARIMORE, N. D.  
Printed By H. V. Arnold  
1911





611  
1574

OLD TIMES  
ON  
PORTLAND PRAIRIE  
HOUSTON COUNTY, MINN.

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INCLUDING FAMILY RECORDS.

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1851—1880



L ARIMORE, N. D.

PRINTED BY H. V. ARNOLD

1911

F612  
H8A68

PRINTED FOR PORTLAND PRAIRIE RESIDENTS  
AND  
DESCENDANTS OF ITS EARLY SETTLERS.

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PUBLISHER'S BOOKLET No. 16.

*Gift-*  
*Frances P. Lapham*  
*Nov. 4 '21*

## PREFACE

During the middle and later seventies a young man of the name of Edward S. Kilbourne was publishing at New Albin a small paper called the "Spectator," for which the writer was occasionally a correspondent. This paper suspended publication about the beginning of the summer of 1879 and its proprietor went to the Red River Valley to look for a location. The country up in that part of Dakota Territory was only just beginning to develop, so returning home, in October, 1879, he founded the "Houston County Argus." Geo. B. Winship had for two years been running a local paper in Caledonia, but in June he had left with his outfit for Grand Forks, then a mere village, where he started the "Herald," at first as a weekly paper. In his last issue at Caledonia, Winship warned publishers against trying thereafter to utilize his vacated field, as times then were in Houston County. This well-intended advice Kilbourne disregarded.

Some two or three weeks prior to issuing the first number of the "Argus" we had an interview with Kilbourne, who outlined his proposed venture and requested something for the paper, anything suitable for a local publication. It chanced at that time that we had been considering the gathering of materials concerning settlement times at Portland Prairie, to be supplemented with our own later recollections, and have them published as a series of articles. Mentioning this literary project to Kilbourne, he said at once that he would be glad to publish them. We now set about having talks with the old settlers, taking notes and dates. These were made the basis of some of the articles of which there were six in the whole series, each with some sub-head and number, but collectively bearing the title, "Early Days on Portland Prairie." We never saved the papers and do not know that any copies are now in existence. After Kilbourne sold out to move to Casselton; N; D.; the office

was burned and the early files of the paper were destroyed. We have not had, therefore, those articles with which to form a basis for the present work. It happened, however, that in the early eighties a History of Houston County was published, and scraps from the articles in question as well as other of our writings in regard to the county in general, were appropriated and used in that work.

Having the facilities to do so, the printing of this work has for several years been contemplated. But it was thought to be useless to undertake the work until we could again visit Portland Prairie with this project in mind and have the chance to collect anew a fund of information, besides collecting family records. The opportunity to do these things came last December.

It should be further explained that with the exception of the book cover this work has not been printed or bound in any office. Nor has it been put in type from any previously prepared manuscript. The contents of each chapter were arranged like an index page, a single line, it might be, indicating the substance of a whole paragraph, and with occasional looking at notes to verify facts, names and dates, the rest, excepting quoted accounts and family records, has been gotten up in type much on the same principle as where a person sits down and composes a letter by using a type-writer. The expression "the writer," is only used for convenience.

Two sizes of type have commonly been used in this work, the smaller size for things of a special character. All works of local history contain errors, and to expect a work of that kind to be faultless in this respect, would be expecting the impossible.

LARIMORE, N. D., SEPT. 30, 1911.

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# OLD TIMES ON PORTLAND PRAIRIE

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## CHAPTER I.

### PORTLAND PRAIRIE.

**T**H**ERE** are two townships in the southern part of Houston County, Minnesota, both corresponding with the surveyor's or government townships and bordering on the Iowa state line, which were among the first of the seventeen townships comprised in the county to receive their first contingent of pioneer settlers. A few of these early settlers had begun to establish claims on the Iowa side of the state line in 1851, and likewise to select claims also on the other side of the line before these Minnesota Territory townships, called Winnebago and Wilmington, had been staked out by the government surveyors into sections and quarter-sections. But this narrative, composed along lines of local history, is not intended to deal with the settlement and earlier life of any township as a whole, but rather with matters of the same import relative to an agricultural community that is located partly in one and partly in the other of the two townships mentioned and which also has a southerly extension across the state line into Iowa. At an early day this community came to be called Portland Prairie.

The general level of the southern portion of Houston County is about 1150 feet above the sea, by which we mean the average altitude of the rounded tops of the ridges between the creek valleys and their branching ravines and the rolling prairies about the heads of these ravines. Portland Prairie is rolling because each syncline is a drainage way that leads down into some ravine and although these hollows lead from the prairie in nearly all directions, drainage waters, as in times of rapidly melting snows or heavy summer showers, ultimately find their way to the Winnebago creek or the Oneota river (the Upper Iowa of maps) and thence to the Mississippi river, the valley of which is about thirteen miles east of the Winnebago and Wilmington town line. The river at the state line is 620 feet above sea-level, hence the descent from Portland Prairie to the river is over five hundred feet, rather gradual where you follow the valleys.

The actual watershed of that section of the county is a ridge, more or less broad in places, with projecting spur-ridges, elevated 100 to 200 feet higher than the adjacent prairies. This upland tract covers a considerable area in Spring Grove and Wilmington townships and a projecting line of ridge, interrupted by a few wind gaps, trends northeasterly into the southern part of Caledonia township. The rock structure of these ridges is a white sandstone but capped toward the top by a hard bluish limestone. The axis or watershed of Portland Prairie extends southeast from the point of the ridge in the eastern part of Wilmington township to Eitzen and beyond. The swells of the prairie may be broad in some of the sections, but usually the fields do not extend level like far in any direction without some slope, either



gentle, or it may be, but slight. Portland Prairie is on the horizon of the base of the sandstone stratum that mainly forms the upland ridges, but as you pass down the ravines to the creek valleys two other strata of sandstone and two of limestone occur, one below the other in alternating layers. The soil of the prairie is a dark brown or black loam, of a kind called loess, which also mantles the tops of the upland ridges and those of the other ridges between the ravines. The prairie soil is from one to two feet in depth, or thereabout, and is apt to grade into a few feet of yellow clay and this in turn into a mixture of clay and decayed limestone rubble, beneath which comes the limestone bedrock.

The early settlers found the sun-shaded sides of the ravines and tops of some of the bluffs or ridges between them, fairly well-stocked with timber, largely of the full-grown kind, with groves of trees of smaller growths where the bluffs began merging into the swells of the open prairie. There were several varieties of oak in the heavy timber tracts, occasionally a hickory tree and a few other kinds, the white oak being the predominant tree. There was but little pine any where in the county, while the chestnut, so common in the eastern states, was not found in Minnesota. The sides of the bluffs that received the rays of the sun in winter, where high and steep, were apt to be bare of trees, though on the opposite sides of the ravines, scrub-oaks, poplar, birch, etc., might occur, more or less thick.

The border prairie groves contained oaks of different varieties and size, but largely consisted of poplar and wild cherry. These last two usually attained in those times only a thickness of three or four inches, when from some

cause, they died out and fell. These groves also contained wild plum trees, some of which bore plums of about the size of small peaches, and the wild crab-apple sometimes grew about the borders of the groves. Patches of hazel brush usually extended long or short distances outward from the groves and in these scrub-oaks and lone trees gained a foothold.

The wild prairie grass grew a foot high or more. The botanist might then have found the prairie rose and quite a variety of flowering plants whose roots were not killed by the prairie fires of the late fall or early spring that annually burned over parts of the country, sometimes in one area, sometimes in another. The wild strawberry was not lacking, but the dandelion was not seen until after the seed had been introduced into the county during settlement days.

The first comers into this section of Houston County did not occupy the open rolling prairie, but rather sought out locations about its south and southeast borders, where the land was partially timbered. Two or three considerations have usually influenced the locations of pioneer settlers in the northwest, to-wit, the shelter of timber, and nearness to water combined with good land. A log cabin once built, other conveniences might be left to be attained as soon as might be, while some privileges commonly enjoyed in the communities from which they had emigrated, were to be indefinitely postponed or left to come as they would.

The first settlers to locate in the neighborhood of Portland Prairie appear to have been Freeman Graves, Everett Brothers, George Carver, John Edger, Mrs. Jas.

Robinson with her sons and daughters, and besides these there were a few others who did not remain long in the country. Freeman Graves was a native of Vermont, born July 10, 1809. He moved to St. Lawrence County, N. Y., where he married Betsey Billings February 6, 1833. He came to Wisconsin in 1846 and located in Columbia County, from which section of the state he came to the place of his settlement, Section 34, Winnebago township, March 15, 1851. After the government survey of the state line in 1852 he found that the most of the land he had selected lay on the Iowa side of it. He spent the remainder of a long life on his farm and ten children were born to the family.

James Robinson was a native of Antrim County, Ireland, born in 1797 and died in 1841. We do not know in what year the family came to America, but in 1845 Mrs. Robinson and family settled in Columbia County, Wis. In 1851 the family located on what is still known as the Robinson place on the southern border of Portland Prairie and on the Iowa side of the state line. Four sons in the family were named William, Henry, George and John. William only was old enough to make entry on the claim. The Fourth of July was observed by raising a log cabin, which in later years gave place to a commodious framed house. Another early settler was John Coil who located south of the Robinson place.

John Edger and three other Irishmen located in Section 32, Wilmington township, in 1852, where Edger broke 23 acres, but he soon moved his location to the southeast corner of Section 36 where he built a log cabin about 14 by 16 feet. None of the party remained long in the township ere they sold their holdings and left.

George Carver settled some distance to the south of where Eitzen now is, in 1852, and on the Iowa side of the state line. He was a native of the state of New York, born January 24, 1814. The sons of Col. Josiah Everett, as he was called, also settled on the Iowa side of the state line. The sons were named Josiah, Andrew, Franklin, Benaiah and Seth. Two daughters of the family were named Orra and Lucy. Some of the sons had settled first in Wisconsin, and came to what became known as the "Everett neighborhood" about 1853-4. All of the family were from about New Portland, Maine, a village about eighty miles north of the city of Portland. Possibly the Everetts gave to Portland Prairie the name that has come down from settlement days.

The first of the Norwegian settlers to locate in Wilmington township came as early as 1853. It was about that time that the government survey of the county was made to establish the corners of sections and quarter-sections. A land office soon afterwards was opened at Brownsville. The earlier settlers had to get their mail at Lansing, Iowa, or bring it out for several families.

In those years some small fragments of the Winnebago tribe of Indians lingered along the Iowa river and Mississippi bottoms, and small groups of them occasionally appeared at the cabins of the settlers to beg food or old clothing or to barter game for what they needed. An old Indian trail from the Iowa to Root river followed the watershed of the prairie and passed around the point of the ridge in its course northwesterly, keeping as conveniently as possible to high ground. The first road struck out across the prairie essentially followed the course already marked by the old trail.

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE RHODE ISLAND SETTLEMENT.

THE most northwestern township of the little state of Rhode Island is called Burrillville. Originally it was ten miles long from north to south and eight miles wide from east to west. In 1806 this large "town" was divided in halves on an east and west line, the southern half being set off to form the town of Glocester. The whole of northern Rhode Island is rough, rocky and quite generally timbered, though the existing timbered tracts are not the old-time woods of fifty or sixty years ago, but more recent growths instead. Although the highest of the great drumlin-shaped hills do not much exceed an elevation of 900 feet above sea-level, yet as viewed from some points the region has a mountainous aspect, at least in that sense on a small scale, the topography in some respects being more pronounced and quite different from that of Houston County. Streams of various sizes from brooks to small rivers intersect the region in question, their valleys usually having gradually sloping sides, according to the form of their bordering hills. In these valleys are located many small mill villages, Burrillville having several, the largest of which is called Pascoag. The mills have generally, since the development and use of the waterpowers of that section, been devoted to woolen manufacturing, though other industries were carried on even in the old days. The creation and growth of manufacturing villages, largely along in the second quarter of the last century, had a

tendency to develop mechanics, and the mills created a class called factory operatives. The latter at first were mainly of the native American stock, but were later reinforced by families of Irish, emigrants from Ireland. A hilly, wooded region like Burrillville could not be much of a farming country. Still, there were many small farms there in the old days, made in forest clearings and by removing cobble-stones from fields, and by cultivating the less stony lands of the broad stream valleys. Large substantial houses and barns had been built earlier than the manufacturing era, and the farms had their orchards of pear, peach and apple trees. The larger townships had each their "townhouse" in which the town meetings were held. Educationally, the bulk of the people were not advanced much beyond what the common schools and the scant periodical literature of the middle of the last century, also occasional town libraries of a few hundred volumes, chanced to afford them, none of these facilities then being of a high order. Some towns, however, maintained academies, and it was common for well-to-do families to send away favored sons to some noted school or to a college.

We have thus referred to northern Rhode Island in general, and the town of Burrillville in particular, because it was from that region, including a neighboring portion of Massachusetts, that quite a contingent of the early settlers of Portland Prairie came, and those from Rhode Island being more numerous than those from any other single state, the prairie colony was referred to by some in the early days as the "Rhode Island Settlement."



Minnesota Territory was organized as such in 1849. As a territory, the Missouri river was made its western boundary. The gold fever emigration to California which began that year, took from the east and the middle west the restless and adventuresome classes, which left the new territory to be quietly occupied by a substantial class of home seekers. Steamboats had begun to run up to the settlement at St. Paul, the number of boats and their traffic increasing each year, and the river tier of counties were rapidly occupied by settlers in the early fifties and through that decade. Where favorable townsites were found adjacent to the main channel of the river, market-towns sprang up.

The first Rhode Island settlers to locate on Portland Prairie came in the spring of 1854. These were James M. and Duty S. Paine, Charles F. Albee and Jeremiah Shumway. They bought out John Edger and occupied his log cabin until they could establish themselves on places of their own. Edger next moved down on the Mississippi river bottom somewhere to the south of the state line. The four men named were still young and all married, but at first had left their wives in the east. The Paines were brothers and the other two had married sisters of the Paine brothers.

At the time they came out to the west, Minnesota was attracting attention in the eastern states as a favorable section for emigrants. The south line of the territory corresponded in latitude with the southern parts of Vermont and New Hampshire or about the same as Portland, Maine, hence the winter temperature might be expected to be somewhat colder than that of southern New England. In 1854 no railroad line from any point

on Lake Michigan had reached the Mississippi river west or northwest of Chicago. The trip from the east was then somewhat harder to make than in these times, and it took longer to accomplish it. Chicago could be reached by railroad; thence a local railroad but recently built took the traveler to Rockford, Ill., from whence he proceeded by stage to Galena. Here a line of boats ran up to St. Paul, making landings at all the market towns on the way. Times were not at their best in Rhode Island and so the party referred to decided to follow the example of others and emigrate to the west. They left the boat at Lansing, Iowa, without any very definite idea where in southeastern Minnesota they would make choice of a location. Learning of a prairie tract some twenty miles to the northwest of Lansing, as yet scarcely occupied by settlers, some of the party went out to view the land there and reported that there would be no need of looking for any other location.

James and Duty (or Darius) Paine came of a large family such as often grew up on the old farmsteads of New England and mainly furnished the recruits for an almost constant stream of western emigration. An ancestor of the Paines, named James King came into the then partial wilderness of Burrillville in 1768 and built a large framed house on a road leading north to Douglass, Mass. The old house was still standing more than a hundred years afterwards, though a later house, itself already old, had long occupied the opposite side of the road, both about two miles north of Pascoag. Here the Paine family were brought up. D. S. Paine was born February 1, 1830 and married Sarah Maria Cook. J. M. Paine was born July 19, 1835 and married as a



first wife Ruth E. A. Shumway, who was born August 4, 1835. Charles F. Albee was born on a farm in Burrillville, within two miles of Pascoag, February 1, 1822. Prior to coming west he had been engaged in carpentering and building. He married Sarah Paine, April 22, 1847; she was born August 8, 1825. The Shumway family came to Burrillville from Oxford, Mass., and located on a farm adjacent to Pascoag. Jeremiah Shumway was born in Oxford, October 15, 1827. He married Mary Paine July 24, 1852. Mary Paine was born July 28, 1832.

During the year others came on from the east. Among these were Asa Sherman, David Salisbury and Silas C. Perry, who, having the means, bought up government lands not as yet entered by any one and held them a while on speculation. After J. Shumway had been in the country a short time he went back to the east for his wife, and probably the wives of the Paine brothers came out at the same time. The Paines located on lands in Section 3E, Wilmington, or on what is now the Schultze place. J. Shumway remained on the John Edger claim, having land on both sides of the state line. For the present C. F. Albee lived in the Edger cabin with the Shumway family and worked at building the few frame houses that were put up that year, the lumber being teamed from Lausing. It is said that at one time the log cabin sheltered sixteen inmates which included small children and infants. Mrs. Sarah Albee, wife of C. F. Albee, came out to Minnesota in the summer of 1854 with her two children that were born at the east. In her old age she wrote out her vivid recollections of those times, of which the following is a part:—

"Opening the door I saw Mary sick, lying on some straw in a corner. Our goods had not come; we had only what we brought in our trunks. The roof of the cabin was thatched with shakes and leaked; when it rained we used to raise an umbrella to keep off all the water we could. It was quite a while before we got our boxes of goods. Now it rained so much that it made the Iowa river raise so that it could not be crossed with a team, and Lansing was our trading point.

"The boys had got two cows and these had calves, so it took one cow's milk, with string beans about as large as your little finger and potatoes as large as marbles, with a little flour for our first meals. Monday night Mary was so sick that she was unconscious; then, Charles really seemed to have the cholera and was really very sick, and from eating such stuff I felt bad and I did not know but that they were liable to die. On Wednesday they were both better.

"Up north about a mile, Duty and wife and James and wife and my father\* had their log cabin, and were just as hard up for food. They were trying to fix a better roof. Well, news came that a neighbor's wife† was so sick with the cholera that she died on her way home from Lansing, and what could be done? One of our neighbors asked if Jerry could not make a coffin if he brought some boards. He said he would try, and so went to work. Charles would raise up on his elbow and tell Jerry how and what to do. My two brothers and Jerry with Mr. J. Coil went along to bury her. They had not been gone long before a regular tornado swept in upon us. The floor boards of the cabin were not nailed down and began to fly up, and the shakes flew from the roof. I expected that the logs would tumble next and no one but myself able to do anything. So I got my babies' wraps on and Charles dressed and got Mary and her baby to the door ready to go if the logs tumbled. I never can forget how Charles

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\* Old Mr. Paine had come on from Rhode Island to stay a while that year with his sons.

† A Mrs. Griffin who lived near Waterloo creek.

looked, so much like a dead man with my white bed-spread over him. We had no bedding except what we brought in our trunks.

"I looked up on the hill and what a sight! My poor old father trying to keep up with the ex-team in which the women and babies were loaded. The roof of their house was entirely gone, trunks blown open and clothing scattered to the winds. James' wife had a silk wedding-dress which was found in a hazel patch, and my father's black silk-velvet vest and neck handkerchief he never did find. This was Thursday and I had not been in Minnesota Territory a week.

"The men soon came back and Jack Coil came riding up, saying that the cattle were in our cornfield, the fence having mostly blown down. Then they all took hold and fixed up the fence. Jack wanted me to take shelter at his house but I could not leave my sick ones. The men went and Grandma Coil found out how we suffered. The next Tuesday we heard that the Iowa river could be crossed and they got Jack's team and brought flour and eatables from Lansing. We did not suffer for food any further. The crops were soon ripe and we had both wheat and corn. We bought an improved place. It had twenty acres in corn, four or five acres in wheat, the old log cabin, and a log yard to herd our stock in, and some hogs that run wild. When we saw them we could tell ours by their marks."

It does not appear who Mrs. Albee came on from the east with, but a few others from Rhode Island were arriving about that time. The party got off the boat at Lansing about noon on a Saturday and were enabled to reach the prairie settlement by team by evening. The Iowa river was not bridged on the Lansing road at that time, but could easily be crossed by teams when the water was low, at a ford. In bringing on household goods from the east it was customary to pack them in large boxes made of pine boards an inch thick. Both the boxes or the pieces of boards when taken apart, even

the nails, were useful about the cabins and small framed houses of the settlements. Probably many a temporary cupboard and like things were made from such materials. Mrs. Albee states in her record that a box which contained their winter clothing was lost on the way and was never recovered. Freight moved west comparatively slow in those times and goods shipped as mentioned might be two or three weeks in reaching Minnesota.

In fixing up the old cabin some suitable logs were cut and with a cross-cut saw short lengths were made and split and shaved into shingles so that the roof was now put in better order than before. J. Shumway also began the erection of a framed house a few rods south-east of the log cabin. A pond hole was dug to retain rain water and the water used to wash clothes until the hogs then running loose, spoilt it for any such use. A sort of sled made from the crotch of a small tree was then used to haul water in a barrel or two up from Duck creek with oxen. These were truly pioneer days when hardships and many inconveniences, not known to the late generation of the same community, had to be patiently borne until they could be overcome. The first preacher Mrs. Albee remembered as coming to that section was a Campbellite who came about once a month for a while and preached to such assembly as could be gathered in those parts and in Mr. Coil's house.

About that time other points were being occupied on Portland Prairie by Rhode Island people and others from that state came later. Asa Sherman is said to have built the first framed house in the community. It stood about one-fourth mile east from the R. E. Shumway house, was a fair sized dwelling a story and a half

high and its gable ends stood toward the northwest and southeast. It had been oriented to face a road, which, before the farms were fenced on all sides, kept as much as convenient upon the axis of the prairie land without regard to section lines. As a community gradually develops, many changes in the location of the roads are apt to ensue. While the land remains unbroken and unfenced, passing teams wear temporary roads along what proves to be the easiest and most direct routes. Silas C. Perry built a log cabin near the foot of the ridge on what is now remembered as the Con. Metcalf place now owned by Herman Schob. The cabin stood on level ground about ten rods south of the house in the side hill that belongs to the farm.

Some other settlers who came from Rhode Island in 1854 and '55 were Dr. Alex. Batchellor, John G. Cook, Tideman Aldrich, John McNelly, James K. True and probably Elisha Cook. The first Germans to settle in this part of Minnesota are said to have come in 1855 and located in the neighborhood of where Eitzen is now. Dr. Batchellor appears to have owned at one time the quarter-section (s. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$  25) now comprising the McNelly and Winkelman places. He built and resided in for some years, the house on the Winkelman place. Such land as was cultivated on the quarter was rented by Tideman Aldrich who built a house where the McNelly residence now stands. Aldrich remained on the prairie for several years but never brought his family out from the east. John G. Cook also lived for some years in a small house that stood about fifteen rods west of Aldrich's location. He was a cooper by trade and was cousin to Elisha Cook.

John McNelly was born in County Down, Ireland, March 25, 1830. At the age of eighteen he came to America and located first in Norwich, Conn., and at some later date moved to Burrillville, R. I. Here he married February 15, 1852 Nancy Shumway, a sister of J. Shumway. He came to Portland Prairie with wife and two small children in 1855 and after living in the old log cabin with other occupants until he could build a dwelling, he located for the next ten years in Section 36, Wilmington township.

What is now the G. M. Watson quarter-section (n. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$  24) was one of those of which Asa Sherman got possession. He sold it May 19, 1855 to James K. True of Burrillville. Mr. True never improved nor built on it but in 1856 he sold it to Amos Arnold of the same town, and about a year later moved with his family from Pascoag to Iowa, settling near Iowa City. Mr. True came to Rhode Island from the state of Maine. Of the German settlers mentioned, Henry Deters came first and gradually others afterwards. In the early days the land around Eitzen was owned mainly by American settlers, but as the years passed they sold out one by one, and German farmers bought their places.

The earlier settlers did not find the country lacking in game. There were big fish in the Mississippi and trout and other kinds in the creeks. Of the bird kind, there were quail and prairie chickens and ducks and wild geese were birds of passage. Not to mention rabbits, always present, a few deer then abounded which C. F. Albee and others hunted with an old-time heavy rifle, now in possession of Alfred Albee.

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## CHAPTER III.

### AFFAIRS IN THE LATER FIFTIES.

PORTLAND Prairie from the days of its settlement has ever been a community of small or moderate sized farms. The swells of the original prairie land, with the hollows or troughs between, descending into a system of ramifying, steep-sided ravines or valleys, together formed a kind of land sculpture that was not favorable for the development of farms of several hundred acres, nor are such estates desirable in any community. Usually, even in the old days the larger farms did not much exceed a quarter-section (160 acres) and a few such might have an additional forty acres. The eighty was more common and forty acre places were not unknown, yet these were liable in the long run to be bought out and attached to larger farms on one side or another. Many of the settlers also secured wood-lots at a distance and on the timbered ridges.

In the fifties settlers and land-speculators bought at low prices government land at the land offices. As we have seen, Sherman, Salisbury and Perry, having the means to make such purchases, got a number of the best quarter-sections on the prairie, not, however, with the intention of holding them longer than they could be sold to others at a profit. In that way Charles F. Albee secured the northeast  $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 25, Wilmington, and then or later also bought a forty adjoining east in Winnebago township. He built a log house on the quarter and a log stable across the road on the forty.

In the spring of 1856 four young men, all from Burrillville, R. I., came west and united with the prairie settlement. These were Horace Arnold, John Albee, and Rufus E., and George T. Shumway, these last two being younger brothers of Jeremiah Shumway. Before coming west John Albee and R. E. Shumway kept a store at Laurel Ridge, a mill village close to Pascoag, and Horace Arnold had worked in a spindle manufactory in the same village, which was also the residence of his father, Amos Arnold. The Shumway residence and farm also lay close to this village on the north. Horace Arnold was born in Cumberland, R. I., April 8, 1833. John Albee, who was brother to C. F. Albee, was a native of Burrillville, born February 14, 1827. Rufus E. Shumway was born in Oxford, Mass., June 1, 1833, and George T. Shumway was born October 30, 1840; he was therefore a boy in age when he left Rhode Island with the others.

From time to time for several years others continued to arrive from the New England states. By this time (1856) it is to be presumed that all of the government land in that section of the county that would make even a good forty acre farm had gone into the hands of purchasers, and where not improved was being held on speculation for sale to new comers. Arnold Stone and family came out to the west in 1856. He located first in Winnebago township, but later moved to a quarter-section in Wilmington, largely ridge land and next west of what was then Perry's farm. Mr. Stone was a native of Burrillville, born May 25, 1821. He married Philinda Aldrich of the same town, November 13, 1844. The family settled on the ridge farm in 1860.



About 1856 a mail route was established between Brownsville, Minn., and Dorchester, Iowa. Intermediate postoffices on the route were provided at Crooked Creek, Winnebago Valley and Portland Prairie. The last named station was kept at Asa Sherman's house, and was attended to by David Salisbury, deputy, Dr. Batchellor having been appointed postmaster. In those days there was not much to attend to for the mail only came once a week and when it reached the prairie the amount of papers, etc., was usually no more than would fill a quarter of an ordinary mail-sack and daily newspapers formed no part of the contents of the bag.

About that time railroads from Chicago and Milwaukee reached the Mississippi at three points, Dunleith opposite Dubuque, Prairie du Chien and La Crosse. The last named place was the nearest railroad terminus to Portland Prairie, but over thirty miles distant and on the other side of the Mississippi. During the boating season and for years afterwards, two lines of boats had the river freight and passenger traffic all to themselves and with no river lines of railroad to change things.

In the early years of the prairie settlement flour and meal had to be teamed from Lansing. About the time now arrived at, a log grist-mill was built at Dorchester by Harney & Bell. Sometime later it gave place to a large framed building with facilities to grind out flour, corn-meal and feed, and became quite a resort for farmers to get their milling done. A store, blacksmith and wagon shop followed and a saw-mill was built on the creek above the village. Dorchester is some five miles from the center of the prairie. Some who had woodlots not too far from the saw-mill, cut oak logs, hauled

them to it and had them sawn into lumber. Charles F. Albee refashioned over his log house with oak lumber sawn at this mill on Waterloo creek.

William Jones was not a prairie settler for he lived on the broad ridge near Freeman Graves' place. He was a native of Franklin County, N. Y., born March 11, 1817. His wife's maiden name was Clara Billings, whom he married in 1844. In 1854 he moved with his family to Illinois, and two years later came to the location where he became so well known to the prairie people. Spafford Williams, Joseph A. Melvin, I. C. Calkins, Samuel Evans and others were settled round about the vicinity of Eitzen, or where this country village was as yet to be, but we lack information as to what years they severally located on their places.

Cornelius Metcalf Jr., came to the prairie in 1857 from Blackstone, Mass., a manufacturing town close to the northern line of Rhode Island. He was born in Blackstone September 30, 1837, and was consequently twenty years of age the year he came on from the east, and had an academy education. A Kohlmeier family came from Chicago and settled on the prairie the same year. An adopted son was named Henry F. Kohlmeier. He was born in Hanover, Germany, March 1, 1842. About the time now reached Amos Lapham and James Emerson and his family also arrived in the country, the latter from Massachusetts. The first located on what is now the L. L. Lapham farm and built a small framed house on the place close to the town line road, or a few rods northwest of the present brick residence. Amos Lapham was a native of Burrillville, R. I.; he had a wife, but no children. The Emerson family settled on

an eighty acre tract in the south part of Section 23, Wilmington township.

At this period the cultivation of wheat, corn, oats and garden stuff had become quite general on such acreage of the farms as had been brought under the plow, but there was, as yet, little in the way of agricultural machinery in the community such as became common some years later. No great amount of wheat could be raised, since it was sown by hand, dragged in by oxen, cut with cradles and pounded out with flails. Sam. Evans is said to have used the first reaper in the community in 1857, and a horse-power threshing machine was introduced about that time. Few or no attempts were made during that decade to set out fruit trees of any kind as it was thought that they would become winter-killed.

The financial panic of the fall of 1857 was severely felt in Minnesota. For nearly a year there was little or no money in circulation on Portland Prairie and it became hard to get such things as people have to buy at stores. Some could not even write their letters for some time because they had not the means to buy the three-cent stamps then required to post them. Of those times Mrs. Albee wrote: "We were so hard up I did not know where to get the next bar of soap to wash my babies' aprons with." But gradually the effects of the great financial disturbance of the later fifties passed away.

The aged parents of Jeremiah Shumway and brothers had been for some time in the country and lived at the Shumway place. Both died the year above mentioned, Noah Shumway in June, and Parmella A., who was a second wife, in October. Born in 1770, Noah Shumway might have heard guns fired in the Revolutionary war.

There were several more families who located on Portland Prairie in 1858. Cornelius Metcalf Sr., with others of his family arrived that year and located on Sherman's place, which they afterwards bought. Mr. Metcalf was a native of Mendon, Mass., and was born in 1806. Leonard Albee, with a wife, son and daughter, came on from Pascoag, R. I., the same year and bought the eighty next west of Dr. Batchellor's place of that time. Leonard Albee, who was cousin to Charles F. Albee, was born in Chester, Mass., November 4, 1810. His wife's maiden name was Eliza Buckman, whom he married in 1833. She was a native of Woodstock, Conn., and was born in 1812.

There came also in 1858 the Cass family who settled across the town line road in part east of C. F. Albee's quarter-section and on a place bought of David Salisbury. They came west from Blackstone, Mass. The head of the family, William Cass, was a native of the town of Smithfield, R. I., and was born March 2, 1809. Mrs. Cass' maiden name was Sarah W. Sturdy; she was born in Attleboro, Mass., May 4, 1819, and was married to William Cass March 27, 1839. Another family of that year, of whom we have no date records of the kind here being used, was that of Hosea W. Pease who came from Maine. Sometime in the preceding decade he married Orra, a daughter of Col. Everett, (see p. 6) by whom he had at this time three daughters and one son. The family settled on an eighty in Winnebago township adjoining the town line road next north of the Lapham farm. Mr. Pease bought the tract of John Albee.

In the changes being made in regard to parts of the roads, that going south from near the present McNelly

place to Dorchester, was placed about twenty rods west of the township line so that it runs one mile through the east part of Section 36, Wilmington. This cut forty acres off James Paine's place which part he sold to Nelson Smith of Burrillville, R. I. The remainder of the strip was owned by J. Shumway, and belonged first to the Robinson farm. Before coming to the prairie Mr. Smith had lived for some time at Rockford, Ill.

Spring Grove township and the west part of Wilmington had largely been occupied by Norwegian settlers, who came either from Wisconsin or direct from Norway. At the north end of the prairie and on either side of the town line were located the "five brothers," Fred, Peter, James, Eber and Iver Hanson. A well-to-do Norwegian farmer named Knut Anderson was also located at the foot of a wooded spur of the main ridge in Section 14, Wilmington, now the Robelle place. Down in the Winnebago Valley the settlers of that time were American, Scotch and Irish, or mainly so.

Minnesota Territory became a state May 11, 1858. The first Wilmington town meeting is said to have been held at the Norwegian schoolhouse in Section 28 on the same day of the month, but it was a tradition that the people of Portland Prairie did not for some time become aware from receiving weekly newspapers, that the territory had actually become a state of the Union. This same year a school house was built on the prairie. It stood for the next ten years close east of the site now occupied by the present one in the McNelly district. At this time Charles and John Albee, J. Shumway and one or both of the Paine brothers, occasionally engaged in carpentering work.



In 1859 David P. Temple came and took up his residence on Portland Prairie. He was a native of Connecticut but came west from Framingham, Mass. About this time Silas C. Perry sold out and removed to Iowa. A man named Benjamin Robbins next had the place for several years.

Levi L. Lapham was born in Burrillville, R. I., April 11, 1829. He married Sarah Cargill <sup>Prosser</sup> of Dudley, Mass., January 13, 1857. She was born May 28, 1834. In 1854 Mr. Lapham went to Chicago, residing there several years. He then moved to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and in 1860 he teamed it with oxen <sup>and cows</sup> to Portland Prairie and went on to the place ever since occupied by him. His brother Amos, who was six years the elder, next bought a place to the west of L. Albee's location where he resided until 1874. A while before Mr. Lapham's arrival at the prairie, a man named Isaac Gault came to the community, and was much on this farm, off and on, taking care of things, during the next dozen years. He was born in Oakham, Mass., October 19, 1826, and was an acquaintance of Lapham before coming on from Michigan, having gotten that far west.

Asa Sherman built a new house in 1860 on the east eighty of the quarter-section he was on and facing south on the section line road. That was a great political year for the country at large, but the prairie community, still in a slow stage of development, and isolated from large towns, railroads and traveled routes, was influenced mainly by what the weekly mail brought to it. There were no daily papers seen, but in those days many excellent weeklies were published in the cities for country circulation and they were apt to contain a fair assortment

of domestic and foreign news, editorials, discussions, speeches, legislative and miscellaneous matter. True, the country's news might be a week or ten days old and foreign intelligence twenty days to a month old when it finally reached its readers (there were then no ocean cables in use) but all of that was taken as a matter of course. There were also political discussions among the neighbors based upon information brought by the papers.

During those years the income gotten from the farms was rather limited and household economy had to be almost always kept in mind. The people lived according to their means. Some things in the line of dress and groceries, more or less common in their former eastern homes, they had to dispense with until they could feel that they were in better circumstances. Pondholes were dug to water the limited amount of stock kept; for household use large cisterns were dug into the underlying clay bed, cemented and covered, including a curb over the center. These stored the rain water from the shingled roofs; drawn up cold it had a slight smokey taste, but one easily got used to it. Where springy places could be found, surface wells six or seven feet deep could be dug from which water could be drawn in barrels.

In fencing along the roads, on division lines of property, or enclosing fields, the zigzag fence four rails high was generally used, the ends of the bottom rails resting in crotches projecting about two feet above ground and the top ones in the accompanying cross stakes. The rails were usually got out in winter and entailed the sacrifice of a large amount of the full-grown timber then, covering the tops and the slopes of many of the bluffs.

In ledgy and wooded sections of the country the rattlesnake has usually been found until exterminated or rendered scarce by the first generation of settlers. They were not wholly a new sort of the snake kind to the settlers who came from Burrillville, since a few still lingered on a low, rocky and forest covered mountain, called Buck Hill, in the northwestern corner of Rhode Island. In the fifties and early sixties there were many rattlesnakes found down the ravines and where the prairie farms bordered these valleys so as to have brush and trees on parts of them, they were often discovered in summer on these lands and in some instances in the very dooryards of houses. To lessen the number of these unwelcome visitants, parties armed with stout staffs or long clubs used to go down the ravines and search the sides of the bluffs in the vicinity of their known breeding-dens.

Before closing this chapter we should speak of what was being done during those years in a church way for the spiritual welfare of the people. The first preachers who came to the prairie community were itinerants who traveled about the new and thinly settled parts of the country and preached in houses and school buildings where any of the latter then existed. One of these was a young Methodist exhorter named Ransom Scott who unfortunately lost his life in a blowing snow storm, on December 9, 1856. He lived with a Mr. Young, an uncle, on the north ridge, Winnebago. Leaving the prairie to return home, about eight miles distant, and against the advice of friends, it would appear that he got bewildered, lost his way and perished in the storm.



At first no apprehension was felt over his absence on account of his vocation, but as time passed and he did not return, inquiries and search began to be made. It was not until next May that any trace of him was found. His body had been almost entirely devoured by wolves. Besides remnants of clothing, his bible, hymn book, knife and wallet were found near by in the ravine in which he had perished. He was 26 years of age and came to the west from the state of New York.

A Minnesota Conference of the Methodist Church was formed in 1855, its annual meetings being held in the spring for several years. Thereafter circuits and charges or stations began to increase as the settlements extended. A small village had been growing up at Caledonia, the county seat, which gave a name to a circuit of the denomination mentioned. At first the Caledonia Circuit included as outlying stations, Hokah and Brownsville, to which was added Popes Prairie, Portland Prairie, and Winnebago Valley. Hokah and Brownsville having later been dropped from the circuit, meetings were held at one time at Hacketts Ridge. A church was soon erected at Caledonia. The following named ministers were assigned by the Minnesota Conference to the Caledonia Circuit during those years:

Rev. John Hooper, conference year 1855-6.

Rev. J. L. Dyer, conference years 1856-7 and 1857-8.

Rev. E. Haight, conference year 1858 9.

Rev. J. Cowden, short conference year, spring to fall, 1859.

Rev. Ellingwood, conference year 1859-60.

Rev. Wendell, conference year 1860-61.

All of the charges mentioned did not, of course, remain attached to the circuit at any given time; even as

matters then stood it was impossible to hold services at all of the stations at any given time on the circuit, on the same Sabbaths, and so the custom of visiting the different communities each alternate Sunday prevailed, and possibly with some, less often than that. Some of these clergymen were young in the ministry, and others more advanced in age, one or two being of the old-fashioned type then in some measure characteristic of western Methodist preachers outside of the cities.

The first of these clergymen held meetings in houses at the prairie, but in 1858 a school house having been built, it was next used for the services. About 1855 an agent of the Sunday School Union visited the community and organized a Sunday School, its sessions also being held in houses as previously appointed, and during the moderate and warm months of the year. The attendance of young people was considerable and from both sides of the state line. In those years before any school house had been built, a quarterly-meeting of the circuit was held at the prairie. The house of J. Shumway, in the southeastern corner of the township, was often the scene of these various religious gatherings.

Occasionally a marriage interested the community. Henry F. Kohlmeier was married to Katherina Burmester, March 13, 1859. R. E. Shumway married Hannah, daughter of Cornelius Metcalf Sr., March 4, 1860. She was born April 25, 1834. Another wedding of the same year was that of Cornelius Metcalf Jr., who married May 29, 1860 Elizabeth M., daughter of Leonard Albee. She was born April 3, 1841.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE WAR PERIOD AND LATER CONDITIONS.

DURING the continuance of the Civil war the prairie people were influenced thereby merely in the way that great events, transpiring far away, would be apt to affect any country community. But the war, lasting over four years, profoundly affected the whole nation and there was scarcely a community so isolated or remote that in some measure did not feel the changed spirit of the times. At the prairie those influences were largely such as resulted from war news in the weekly papers, neighborhood discussions, enlistments, and later on, compelling of others to become soldiers by conscription, the rise of prices that the war engendered, and other factors. There was no telegraph station nearer to the prairie than La Crosse, yet news of battles and naval engagements, minus details, sometimes reached the community several days in advance of the mail which brought St. Paul, Chicago and other papers. Some traveler or business man, leaving La Crosse, would come to Caledonia by way of Brownsville, bringing the latest war news and likely also some copy of a city daily in his coat pocket; again, important news was dropped off the packet boats at Lansing and would reach the prairie from that point.

The early part of the war period infused some sort of military spirit into a number of the men, so far as to assemble on horseback and practise cavalry tactics on the roads; at times, too, the grown boys met with guns

to imitate skirmishing and other sorts of practise. Along in 1861, '62 and later there were a number of enlistments of young men from the prairie and vicinity; some of these served in Iowa regiments, but mostly they belonged to Minnesota regiments.

As was stated at page 16 Amos Arnold bought of an early possessor the northeast  $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 24. The purchase was made on recommendation by letter of his son, Horace Arnold, already in the country, and included forty acres of woodland on the Winnebago creek bluffs in Section 17. In 1856 Amos Arnold moved his family from Burrillville to Danielsonville, a cotton-factory town in the eastern part of Connecticut. In the spring of 1861, Ellery C. Arnold, wife and two small children, emigrated from this place to the west, and arrived at Lansing just at the time the country was rocking under the excitement of the Confederate bombardment of Fort Sumter, the news of which speedily traveled to all points then reached by telegraph and the river steamboat lines. Reaching the prairie, E. C. Arnold went on to the Tideman Aldrich place. In the summer, Amos Arnold came out to see his land and build a house on it. The house, as then built, was a story and a half high, and measured 16 by 24 feet. In November Mr. Arnold went back to Connecticut, accompanied by Albert Marcy who was living on an eighty next south of Benj. Robbins' farm. Henry Robinson had been living with his brother William, but owned sixty acres in Section 36. He built a house on this land and occupied it that year.

In 1862 Dr. Batchellor moved to New Jersey for a year or two so as to enjoy a milder winter climate. His quarter-section had become somewhat divided. The

forty acres next to the townline road was in possession of Tideman Aldrich and E. C. Arnold occupied the place; the next forty acres was owned by John G. Cook, and a son-in-law named Amos Glanville lived with him; the west eighty, now the J. Winkelman place, on which Dr. Batchellor and family lived, he sold to a man named McDan. This purchaser did not retain the place longer than the next year ere he sold it to Wm. Walker Everett and moved to Iowa.

William R. Ballou, from Burrillville, R. I., lived at the prairie at this time and owned the forty in Section 24 which has the road to Caledonia on its east and north sides. At one time after passing the east end of the ridge the road struck northwest across this forty, passing just north of a tree-covered sandstone hill, a mound-like outlier of part of the ridge close south of it. At the foot of the mound on its east side Mr. Ballou dug a cellar for a small house, and walled it with stone taken from the mound, but no house was ever built there. Several years later the stone was carted away to furnish a foundation to the Wright district school house, when that was built. The depression of the cellar, dug nearly fifty years ago, is surrounded by brush and trees, but has not filled up much since its walls were removed.

The Sioux Indian massacre of August, 1862, though mainly confined to western Minnesota, spread a feeling of insecurity and alarm east to the Mississippi, and largely owing to the absence of so many men from the state serving in the Union armies and the weakness of the garrisons at the few military posts on the frontier. There were but few lines of telegraph then in the state, hence false or exaggerated reports, due to excitement,

were all the more apt to be far carried and remain the longer uncontradicted. There were no Indian hostilities nearer to the center of Houston County than perhaps 150 miles; yet many families in the southeastern part of the state turned their stock loose in the fields and taking to their teams, started for the river towns. Most of them turned back after the temporary panic had subsided. Some would-be refugees from the country west of Portland Prairie reported that the Indians were at Spring Grove, and several families gathered and started for Lansing; but having been halted at the Albee place, it was thought best to ascertain whether or no they were about to fly from an imaginary danger. So C. F. Albee and Asa Sherman rode horseback to Spring Grove and learning that there was no cause for alarm, they came back, and then the intended refugees returned to their homes. Thereafter the people followed the details of this Indian war in the papers until the hostiles were driven beyond the Missouri river.

Two families, originally from Burrillville, R. I., came to the prairie that fall from the west, leaving on account of Indian troubles. The heads of these families were Marcius Eddy and Edin Ballou. A daughter of Edin Ballou had been the wife of Asa Sherman, but she had died early in July of that year. Harley P. Kelly, wife, and two children, also came in 1862 and for the time being, occupied the house that Amos Arnold had built. This place was in process of being broken and fenced at that time by Horace Arnold. The Kelly family came west from Blackstone, Mass.

Next south of the Arnold place lay a quarter-section owned by Charles F. Wright, a store-keeper of Black-



stone, Mass. The drainage of this quarter-section is eastward by way of the Pease and Tippery ravines and southwest into the Duck creek ravine. The north part of the quarter once contained considerable timber and patches of hazel brush between groves, both also overlapping upon the south part of the Arnold quarter. The largest body of this timber covered several acres about the northeast corner where the slope is toward the head of the Pease ravine. Toward the northwest corner there is a low sandy knoll, the west slope then being covered with patches of hazel brush, and the east slope, rather gentle to the road, had several large red oaks and a growth of smaller trees adjoining, all extensive enough to be called a grove. Sometime in the fifties a log cabin was built on the place, amidst the red oaks. At the time Mr. Wright bought the place it was owned by a man named Esten. Probably the quarter in the first instance, was one of those entered by David Salisbury or Asa Sherman.

Charles F. Wright was born in Vernon, Vermont, October 7, 1831. He was educated in Providence, R. I., and married Mary, daughter of Cornelius Metcalf of Blackstone, October 7, 1856. She was born in Mendon, Mass., June 13, 1832. Mr. Wright was engaged in the mercantile business in Blackstone from 1849 to 1858. In 1863 he moved with his family, then including two children, to Portland Prairie, and occupied the cabin mentioned as already being on the place.

Asa Sherman had been on to Rhode Island that year and in returning with Mr. Wright the boat came up the river in the night. He was missed from the boat when it reached Lansing and was never seen or heard of after-

wards, the general supposition being this, that he had gone down to the lower deck, fallen asleep near the bow, which swayed slightly from the motion of engines and paddle-wheels, and falling overboard had been drowned. Mr. Wright had been back and forth between the prairie and the east more than once, so that the occasion on which he brought his family out was probably not the same as when Sherman disappeared. In later years one could hear rumors that Sherman had been seen in the army, and in Colorado, but such reports are almost sure to become circulated about persons who have mysteriously disappeared and their remains never found. The Metcalf farm of those years on the Winnebago side of the townline road had earlier belonged to Sherman; his home place was bought of his heirs by Christian Flessa, and a farm on the south side of the road was bought by Fred Ruhe.

Two houses were built not far north of the prairie ridge in 1863. Edin Ballou, who had two grown-up sons and a daughter, went on to what is now the Herbert Lapham place and put up a small framed house near the southeast corner of the eighty. H. P. Kelly took land half a mile farther west that had once been one of the Perry claims, and built a house of small hewn logs near the end of a projecting spur of the ridge. Kelly's land extended back to the top of the main ridge; along the northern slope of the ridge at that point and extending west, there was then and still remains a considerable tract of timber, which came to be called Kelly's woods, and in which he cut the logs to build his house. After this family vacated the A. Arnold house at the end of the ridge, it was occupied by E. C. Arnold.



During part of the war period the postoffice was kept at the old log cabin on J. Shumway's place. After Dr. Batchellor moved to New Jersey, or before, John G. Cook had the office at his house for some time and then in 1863 R. E. Shumway having been appointed postmaster, it was moved down to the cabin where he then lived.

At this point we will again refer to the ministers who were annually assigned to the Caledonia Circuit by the Minnesota Conference of the M. E. Church and who also preached at the prairie, holding services in the school house of that time. Rev. Nahum Taintor, a middle aged clergyman, came in the fall of 1861 and being again returned the next fall, he remained two years on the circuit. In the fall of 1863 he was succeeded by an elderly clergyman of the name of White who was annually returned twice afterwards, and consequently remained three years at Caledonia, which was then the longest limit that a Methodist minister could stay on a circuit. Usually they were changed every year or two.

At the prairie a Sunday School met at the schoolhouse at least during the warm months of the year. They had some pretense of a library, kept in a flat box set upright, about three feet high, two-and-a-half feet wide and eight inches deep, opening in front. Some carpenter made it of planed pine boards, and of course fixed shelves inside. Most of the books were small ones and on the whole, of a sort that the young people now would not care for. It is probable that in those days when eastern Sunday Schools changed their libraries, the least worn and the unread books were separated out, and turned over to some agency to supply needy country communities in the west.

About this time Nelson Smith sold out to a German named August Guhl and moved as others had done into Iowa. It was said of Guhl that when he came to this country, a dollar in gold money was worth two in greenbacks; that having brought over a thousand dollars in gold money he exchanged it for \$2,000 in American paper currency, and using a thousand dollars of the latter he bought the Smith place which had a fair sized framed house on it.

It was about the point of time arrived at that three young men named Elijah, John and Abram Sinclair left Wisconsin and located on Portland Prairie. Their family name was really Vreeland, but they assumed that of their mother, who was a Sinclair before marriage. It was later thought that the draft or fear of it had something to do with their leaving Wisconsin and changing their family name. Another brother named James Vreeland appears to have come earlier; he was a married man and was located on what is now the W. E. McNelly place in Section 26. A fifth brother, named Enoch Vreeland, came after the war was over, remained a year or two in the community and then moved to Missouri, where some time later he died.

In 1864 Dr. Batchellor was back from New Jersey and went on the place that he had sold to Tideman Aldrich. Either the latter had never fully paid for it or it may have been bought back again. The doctor and family were quite an addition to the prairie socially. At this time David P. Temple built a house on the north eighty of the Wm. Cass place, which he had bought. Temple and Marcius Eddy and family occupied the house and the place was carried on by the latter.

In June, 1864, Amos Arnold moved with part of his family from Danielsonville, Conn., to the prairie. The Mississippi was reached by railroad at Prairie du Chien where the packet "Itasca" lay waiting at six o'clock in the evening for its throng of up-river passengers. The boat, however, did not leave until after midnight, and reached Lansing about eight o'clock the next morning. Knut Anderson was in town and took the family out to the prairie, a hard journey in a common farm-wagon. In July a house was built for E. C. Arnold and family, located on the east side of the farm and above the shallow ravine that centrally intersects this quarter-section. C. F. Albee, L. L. Lapham and one or both of the Paine brothers were the local carpenters who put up the house, but, of course, only engaged in such employment when any chance job called for their services.

The observance of the Fourth of July in the community took the form of picnics in some shady grove, the women having previously provided the cakes, pies, roast chicken, coffee, etc., for the whole assemblage, who sat down at a long table fixed of loose boards. In 1864 the picnic was held in a grove of oaks on Duty Paine's place and just above the Duck creek ravine. Duck creek, so called, now perhaps dry, was a small streamlet issuing from springs within the last mile of the ravine, which opens into the valley of Waterloo creek above Dorchester.

The latter part of that summer was dry and then and all that fall some people had to haul water for household use from the springs then existing well on down the ravines. Water barrels were placed in a farm wagon and while one dipped up the water, using two pails al-

ternately, an assistant standing in the wagon, emptied them into the barrels. Sacking had to be tied over the tops of open barrels to keep much of the water from slopping out while driving home. A fine spring of that time called "Tippery spring" was located about three miles down the ravine of that name, on the south side, and flowed from the base of a sandstone ledge, which, as there cropping out of the side of the bluff, was about twelve feet high. The flow was enough to have filled a pipe four or five inches in diameter and formed the head of a fair sized brook that run through some meadows about two miles to the Winnebago creek. The road from the prairie then followed the bed of the ravine to the head of the meadow fields and then took to the foot of the bluffs on the north side, as in present times. The road passed near the spring and across it stood the house of the Tippery family in part built of hewn logs. They had a lime-kiln at the foot of the bluff northwest from the house. The family came from Pennsylvania about 1853, locating first near where the upper mill now stands, and later moved up to the spring.

During the same fall Benj. Robbins sold his quarter-section to Joel S. Yeaton, and moved away. Mr. Yeaton was from about New Portland, Maine, from whence several other families on the prairie had come earlier. His family did not come until November.

That fall a draft took many of the men with families at the prairie, who otherwise would not have deemed it expedient to leave their families to serve in the army. There had been one or two drafts before this, but these had not very perceptibly affected the community. Some, others besides married men were drafted at this time.

The drafted men had to report at Rochester, Minn., and were mainly assigned to the 5th Minnesota Infantry. Before they left the prairie election day came, Tuesday, November 8th, and with it a snow storm from the northeast. That day and the following night the snow fell as much as eight inches deep, but melted off again after some days had passed. Either at the time of the draft mentioned, or previously, two men of the community did not report at Rochester, but fled instead to parts unknown, preferring exile from their homes and friends rather than come within range of Rebel bullets. They were not seen at the prairie again until the fall of 1865. During the last two years of the war hundreds of men, most of whom took refuge in Canada, did the same rather than be compelled to serve in the army contrary to their choice. The 5th Minnesota regiment took part in the battle of Nashville, December 16, 1864. William Walker Everett, one of the prairie men, was killed in this battle.

The winter of 1864-5 was rather cold but not as severe as some in earlier years were reported to have been. People who had been troubled for water the previous fall kept a water barrel in their houses into which clean snow was put from time to time, and a pot of warmed water was occasionally added to keep the snow mainly melted.

We have spoken of how slowly important news sometimes reached the prairie. The fall of Richmond was inferred for some time before the event was heard of, because the distant sound of a cannon was noted in the direction of Decorah, as if being fired in celebration of some important event. Although the assassination of



President Lincoln occurred on a Friday evening, it was not until the forenoon of the following Tuesday that any report of this startling event reached Portland Prairie, though known at La Crosse on Saturday. Some traveler from Caledonia brought the news to the prairie, and it caused a profound impression. The day was cloudy, with sprinkling rain, and people gloomily discussed the event in their houses. The report also had it that Secretary Seward had been assassinated, but of details there were none, except that these deeds had been done in the interest of the falling Southern Confederacy. The people had to wait for the particulars of this direful tragedy until Friday evening, April 21st. and then to the disappointment of many, the Chicago papers failed to get through. This meant another anxious week of waiting. However, the mail man was questioned as soon as he came in, whether this report was true or not, but while able to confirm it he could give but few details. It was not until the evening of the 28th, two weeks after the event, that prairie people who had to rely on the weekly papers from Chicago and the east, were enabled to read any newspaper accounts of the great tragedy.

During the last year of war, R. E. Shumway being absent in the army, Hannah, his wife, attended to the mail. The mail man usually came along, sometimes on horseback, early in the evening. Entering the old log cabin he dropped the large leather bag on the floor. Hannah pulled up the top, unlocked it, and emptied the contents out upon the floor. The amount, mostly papers in packages or singly in wrappers, perhaps two or three magazines, and occasionally a book, would have about half filled a bushel basket, sometimes a little more. A

few loose letters appeared, but the bulk of them for each postoffice on the route were tied up in separate bundles. The mail had to be sorted over and the little of it that went on to Dorchester was put back in the bag, and this being laced up and the snap-lock pressed to catch, the carrier at once departed. Next came the distribution of the mail. A half dozen persons were usually waiting to get their own (or parent's) mail and often that of near neighbors. First the names on the letters were read and handed to those who were authorized to receive them. Then the miscellaneous mail followed together with the papers that came in packages. Much of the mail was disposed of at once in that way, but some had to be laid aside until called for later. The usual postoffice address on the letters was "Wilmington, Houston County, Minn."

It was now the spring of 1865, and the war ending in May, those from the prairie who had served in the army gradually returned to their homes, as mustered out of service. The 5th Minnesota Infantry was retained in Alabama to do garrison duty until the following September when the regiment was sent to Fort Snelling to be mustered out of service. But few men who went from Portland Prairie and vicinity were killed or died of disease while in the army service. It should be borne in mind, however, that quite a number were in service only within the last year of the war.

We shall now proceed to make some mention of the various families living on Portland Prairie or about its borders, particularly within a mile of the main road through the community and as existing in the spring of 1865, or before certain families had moved away.

In coming from Caledonia to the prairie, the upper portion of some ravines being passed, and a rise up a hill made, the first house reached in which an American family lived, was that of Harley P. Kelly, on the north side of the prairie ridge or bluff as some called it. The family consisted of Mr. Kelly and wife and a boy and girl named George and Ella. George was born Sept. 25, 1853, and all were from the east.

Next east where the road turns south was the house of Edin Ballou. There were himself and wife, two grown-up sons named Edwin and Henry, and a daughter also grown named Mary.

Next on the road south, at the end of the bluff, stood the house of Amos Arnold, then no larger than when first built. Besides Mr. and Mrs. Arnold, there were in the family Caroline E., Horace, Maria, Lucy and Henry V. The last two were still in their later 'teens, and the two older daughters returned to Connecticut that summer. Over on the east side of the farm stood the house of E. C. Arnold, oldest son of Amos Arnold. Besides himself and wife there were three small children in the family, Horace F., Adeline and Emma. The two first were born in Connecticut.

South of the Arnold place came C. F. Wright's farm. Mr. and Mrs. Wright had three small children at this time, Samantha, Frederick A., and Charles. The two first were born in Blackstone, Mass.

Up north on the townline road lived the Hanson brothers and one, Searns Nelson, but we have no data concerning their family relations.

Next on this road south of Hanson's place was H. W. Pease's eighty. Both himself and wife were getting somewhat along in years. There were several children in the family, all born in Maine, viz: Esther, Orra, Charles and Lucy.

Next on the east side of the road came L. L. Lapham's place. While he was in the army it was looked after by Isaac Gault. Mr. and Mrs. Lapham had only two small children at this time named Fanny and Cora. There were no houses then on the ridges east of the Hanson, Pease and Lapham farms, nor even east of the Albee, Temple and Cass places.



At the Albee place were Charles F., and Mrs. Sarah Albee, John, brother to Charles, and usually two hired men. The farm consisted of the quarter-section the house stood upon, also the forty across the road. There was a long log stable on this forty roofed with straw, and a shop stood to the south of the house. The children of the family had all been born in the years 1848 to 1864, and named Edgar, Emily, Maria, Alice, Alfred and Olive. The first two were born in Burrillville, R. I.

The house of David P. Temple stood across the road east from the present Alfred Albee place. Mr. Temple was no farmer, but rather a person who sought civic offices instead, at one time representative in the state legislature, and later along county superintendent of schools. Marcius Eddy and wife occupied the house, having two sons, Henry and Herbert. The first was old enough to enter the army which he did in the summer of 1864. The second was then a boy of about fourteen. Between these two, another son had died in December, 1863.

The Cass family next south lived quietly, the old folks seldom leaving the place to go anywhere. All of the family were natives of Massachusetts. There were two daughters and two sons in the family, Charlotte, George, Ada and William, the last having been born in 1853.

The Metcalf farm bordered both the townline road and that which runs east and west for a mile, passing the McNelly school house. From the latter point east and south, it was then called the Lansing road. The house on the place stood back from both roads. The farm was carried on by Cornelius Metcalf Jr., and his brother David. Mr. Metcalf, their father, lived with them. Cornelius Metcalf Jr. had married Elizabeth, daughter of Leonard Albee, and they had two small children at this time, George and Lucinda. Mrs. R. E. Shumway and Mrs. Wright were daughters of Cornelius Metcalf Sr., whose wife had died before the family came to the west.

At the south end of the next eighty east stood Sherman's later built house, facing the Lansing road, but now owned by Christian

Flessa. He had a son Adam, about fifteen years of age at this time. Of the people who lived about where Eitzen now stands or below there, a community part German, we have little information of the kind here sought.

Returning nearly to the McNelly school house, on the south side of the road was the Kohlmeier place. Mr. Kohlmeier had been in the army, but having been sick in an army hospital, on leaving it he mysteriously disappeared, and was not heard of afterwards. The place then passed to Henry Flegg (Kohlmeier) who was also a soldier of the Civil war.

Next west of the school house was the residence of Dr. Alex. Batchellor and wife. The children of the family ranged from a grown-up son, over twenty years old, downward to a small boy, and were named Frank, Lucy, Alexander, Martha, Moses and Stephen.

A short distance west stood the house of John G. Cook. He had a daughter who married Amos Glanville. Besides these and the old folks, there were two nephews of John living with them named Frank and Gideon Cook. The aged father of John had lived with him earlier, but he had died in 1861.

Next down the road west came the widow Everett's place, Mr. Everett, as already mentioned, having been killed in the army, near the close of the previous year. He was a son of a brother of Col. Cy. Everett. The house had been built some twenty rods back from the road. The children of the family were born from 1849 to 1862, the first two by a first wife, and named William, Thomas, Irene, Walker, George, Eliza and David.

Some distance above the ravine into which the road descends, and on the north side of the road, stood the house of Leonard Albee and wife. ~~Mrs. Albee was sister to Dr. Batchellor.~~ The place was carried on by Wesley Albee, who was born in 1842.

In passing down the road to Dorchester, the first house passed on the east side and some thirty rods south of the road corners, was that of August Guhl. The family were German, but we have no particulars concerning them.

A little further along the road and on the west side, stood the house of James M. Paine and family. There were several small children in the family at this time, to wit, Martha, James S., Rufus M., Amy H., and Minerva.

There were no other houses very close to the road [in Section 36, although that section was as thoroughly divided into small farms as it very well could be. In the southeast corner of the section and reached by a roadway from the main one, stood the house of Jeremiah Shumway, a fair sized framed dwelling, and the old log cabin of settlement days, which had a loft under its roof, as was usual with such dwellings. There were then (1865) five children in the family, the first named having been born in Burrillville, R. I., in 1853: Viola P., Herbert P., Mary Evelyn, Edgar E., and Charles O.—Rufus E. and Hannah Shumway, as has previously been stated, occupied the log house on the place, in which was the Wilmington postoffice. There were only two small children in the family at that time, Adelia and Frederick.—A few rods northeast of the Shumway house, or in the southwest corner of Section 31, Winnebago township, was a small place owned by Simeon Wait. He was in the army during the war. We have no particulars concerning his family.

After crossing the state line, the road turns west by south and up through a tract of brush and trees for a quarter of a mile, then south again upon a broad tract between ravines, once partially timbered. Just below the last turn of the road and a little to the west of it is the Robinson place, and even in 1865 the house was a substantial one. Old Mrs. Robinson was still living, but the place was considered as belonging to William, whose land extended north across the state line into the south part of Section 36, Wilmington, in which Henry Robinson and sister Esther also resided. William was married and had one child, Minnie.

In the northeast part of Section 36 Duty Paine had his farm, bordering on both roads, but his log house was not very near to either of them. Children in the family were Catherine, James, Nathan, Sarah, Ida, and others born after he moved away.

A road through this section on the quarter line passed west to the Duck creek ravine, intersecting or starting from the Dorchester road a short distance south of J. M. Paine's place. North of this cross-road and toward the west side of the section, John McNelly then lived on a small farm. With himself and wife there were several children in the family that had been born to them, to wit, Ella, William, and Annie. The first was born at the east; two others had died in infancy, and a boy of nine had died in the summer of 1863.

To the south of the cross-road, Elisha Cook and family lived on another of the small farms of Section 36. The children of this family were named Amelia, Susan, Henry (this one was imbecile) Maria, Charles, William and Warren.

Returning northward again, there were a few families on the western side or border of the prairie of whom some note should be taken. Arnold Stone's quarter-section was largely ridge land and his house stood on a broad part of the Wilmington ridge, a mile back from its eastern termination. Mr. and Mrs. Stone had quite a family, largely girls, the oldest having been born in the late forties. The children were named Marcus, Ellen, Jane, Phebe, John, Emerline, Adelaid and Lewis.

South of the A. Stone farm and mostly on lower land, lay an eighty owned by James Emerson. His wife was not living, but he had one or two daughters nearly grown up. The names of the children were Eunice, Eldora, Willis and Lydia.

The northwest  $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 24 (excepting the forty owned by W. R. Ballou) and an eighty next south of this quarter, formed Joel S. Yeaton's rather large farm. Mr. and Mrs. Yeaton had the following named children in the family, all excepting the last born in Maine: Florence, Zelotes, Elias, Melvin and Edgar.

Next south of the Yeaton farm, an eighty then belonged to an elderly man named Alfred Marcy. His wife was a sister of L. Albee. This eighty is crossed through the middle by the road that runs south into the Duck creek ravine. Just west of this road, in one place, the ground rises to a conical hill, a sandstone

outlier of the ridge. Just south of this mound stood a long cabin built of scantling and pine boards. Such dwellings were battened outside and papered inside, old newspapers often being used. Mr. Marcy had a grown-up son named Albert living with him and also a daughter named Ada, well along in her 'teens.

Along or near the road to the south of Marcy's place, there were a few other families—German, Norwegian and American. Among these there was a Meitrodt family still represented upon the same place; then James Vreeland and the Sinclair brothers lived on farther south. The suspected identity as to connection between the Sinclairs and Vreelands by closer family ties than cousins, (p. 36) began to be admitted after the close of the war. Over west, Amos Lapham and wife occupied a quarter-section farm. Mr. Lapham was born in 1823 and his wife's maiden name was Deborah Neil, whom he married June 28, 1854.

The following is a list of soldiers of the Civil war, so far as we have been able to gather their names, who were of Portland Prairie and saw service for longer or shorter periods in the South.

E. C. Arnold, 5th Minnesota,	Frederick Monk, 12th Iowa,
Henry C. Ballou, 10th Minn.,	August Pottratz, 5th Minn.,
Edward L. Ballou, 6th Minn.,	John Robinson, — Iowa,
— Burmester, 5th Minn.,	Jeremiah Shumwuy, 5th Minn.,
Henry Eddy, 11th Minn.,	Rufus E. Shumway, 5th Minn.,
Wm. W. Everett, 5th Minn.,	Geo. T. Shumway, 10th Minn.,
Henry Flegg, 8th Iowa Cav'y,	Wm. H. Stone, 6th Minn.,
Amos E. Glanville, 10th Minn.,	Frederick Theis, 2d Minn.,
Wm. H. Going, 4th Minn.,	Simeon Wait, 10th Minn.,
Henry Kohlmeier, 5th Iowa.,	Jasper Williams, — —,
L. L. Lapham, 1st Minn. Art'y,	Joseph Winkelman, 10th Minn.,

A son of Israel Noyes died in the army; the regiment he belonged to is not known to the writer. Possibly two or three others of the neighborhood not listed above may have served in the war,



We shall next proceed to take some note of material conditions as existing on Portland Prairie in 1865, the year the war closed, though the same might also apply generally, for some time before and for two or three years later than the year specified. The farms we have mentioned had by this time been quite generally brought under cultivation, especially those of forty and eighty acres. But there was considerable unplowed land on some of the larger places, held as pasture, hay land or because partially covered with hazel brush and scattered trees, in some cases groves of poplar and scrub-oak, requiring considerable labor to clear and break. North of the Arnold farm lay a whole quarter-section that had not been touched by the plow, and owned by some one in Rhode Island, probably the last of the D. Salisbury claims. Fully fifty acres on the south side of the Arnold quarter had not been broken, and much of Wright's eighty adjoining was also in its natural state. His south eighty, now Frank Theis' farm, was still covered by the original prairie grass, and the same may be said of what is now Henry Weibke's place. Nor had anything been done to bring the top of the ridge under cultivation.

Next as to farm buildings. There were some good framed houses in the community, but usually without additions, or in some cases, a cheaply built lean-to about the rear doors. Some were log houses, yet roofed and shingled as other dwellings are. The chinks were filled with mortar and they were whitewashed inside. A few dwellings were of the cabin sort. Some of the houses were not plastered inside, but papered instead. The stove-pipe projecting above the peak of the roof, was, in those times, more common than brick chimneys. A few

of the farm dwellings were painted, or had been painted when new, but the weathered aspect predominated. On the whole, the larger number of the farm dwellings of the community were of limited size and indifferent appearance, and as for roominess, far inferior to the broad roofed, two-story-and-attic farm houses of New England, in which some of the prairie people had been born.

What shall be said of barns on the premises of the prairie farms? In comparison with present times it might almost be said that there were none. But as the stock then kept required shelter, makeshifts for barns were constructed that served their purpose for those years. They were called "straw barns." Crotches placed eight to ten feet apart were set in three rows, the center row being the highest. Large poles were run in the tops of the crotches and smaller poles and fence rails were set leaning against the crotch poles and end rafters all around the outside. Poles or fence rails were used for rafters, and all this formed the frame-work of the structure. In threshing time a large amount of straw was run upon and banked around it, and what was left would be stacked in the yard against some part of the stable for the cattle to work on. Sometimes the stable had a fence of posts and poles built around it within three feet of the sides and ends and straw was trampled into the spaces between, making a straw wall for the sides and ends. The entrance might be provided with a door made of boards. The tops of these straw barns or sheds were rounded up like the top of a rick of hay, so as to shed off the rain. In such sheds, horses, cattle and poultry were wintered. A few had log stables, but they were covered at first as were the others.



In regard to granaries, the only ones the writer now remembers as existing in 1865 were one on the Metcalf place, and one on Yeaton's farm at the foot of a spur of the ridge, southwest of the log cabin that he occupied. It had been built by a former owner of the place, either Perry or Robins. The Metcalf granary was built of oak lumber, probably sawn at the mill on Waterloo creek, which was now out of use.

Some of the people had surface wells, but all depended more or less on rainwater cisterns. On the Arnold farm a pondhole was dug in the ravine a quarter of a mile east of the house and before it became filled with water a well seven feet deep was put down close south of the pond. A tiny spring was struck and gave about two feet of standing water in the well, sometimes more in a wet spell, and the well was stoned up. The water had to be hauled up to the house with a sled, barrel and oxen. Mr. Wright also dug a deeper well down into sandstone rock just south of the log house he occupied, and using a curb and buckets, he managed to get a good supply of water if the season was not a dry one.

The people were fairly well provided with agricultural machines and common farm implements, yet not so much so as in later years. There was a great deal of changing of work in the community, particularly in harvest and threshing time. Some who had a limited acreage in wheat hired their cutting done by a neighbor, offsetting the bill as much as possible by an exchange in work. As late as the spring of 1865 some of the people were still sowing grain by hand, though the broadcast seeder was coming into use about that time. Spring wheat was then the principle crop; next in acreage came

corn, and then oats. Harvest time was the busiest season which began in the latter part of July. Some men from a distance came in at this time, but largely the crews were made out by exchanging with neighbors, their grown boys or their hired men. The same usage applied to threshing crews. Various self-raking reapers were in use, especially one called the "New Yorker" that cost over \$200. The self-binder was unknown, and although conceivable, was hardly thought to be a possibility.

There was scarcely any such thing on Portland Prairie as threshing in the field directly from the shock. The harvest over, the grain was stacked. On the larger farms, some stacking was done in the fields and sooner or later the straw was burned; but in any event numbers of the stacks were pitched about the stable yards for use of the straw, especially oats straw and chaff. The steam-thresher, although beginning to be used in some parts of Minnesota, was never seen on the prairie during the wheat-raising period. There were only a few machines owned in the community (one by C. F. Albee) and having stacked their grain, each farmer had to await their turn for a machine to get around to their places and do their jobs. Various horse-power machines were in use, run by four or generally five span of horses, walking around in a circle and attached to the arms of a low machine largely composed of iron gearing, placed back about three rods from the threshing-machine, the two being connected by a shaft in loose jointed sections so it could be slanted from a low level where the horses stepped over its covering, gradually upward to the shaft of the cylinder of the thresher, at which point beveled

gearing communicated the power to the whole machine. They were provided with straw-stackers so that the sheds and stables could be covered anew each fall, with stacks of straw piled up as high as need be in the yards. The driver, with a long-lashed whip, stood on a platform just above the gearing of the horse-power and which covered it over, thus keeping everything in motion. Occasionally a stop had to be made to mend a broken belt, or to adjust something else about the rig that had gone wrong, but a regular break-down seldom occurred. It took about a dozen men and boys to attend to everything; three or four men went with the outfit and the others were gathered in the neighborhood. After the outfit had pulled away, a ring at least 24 feet in diameter was left where the teams had circled around, and much grain was left scattered on the ground where the pitching, threshing and measuring had been done. It should be added that harvest and threshing made busy times for the women and their daughters, because, as they expressed it, "they had so many extra mouths to feed."

It may be wondered at now in a section where wheat was the principal crop, how so many had to tide along without granaries. Of course various makeshifts had to be resorted to. One method was to build bins of fence rails, line them inside with straw and fill them up with wheat as threshed. Another method was to build bins of scantling and pine boards, blocked up a foot or more above ground, but in either case roofed over with a rounded packing of straw. Those were times when the people had to get along without many things, some big but more of the little sort of which they often found that they stood in need.

The cleaning up of wheat for market or for seeding was attended with some inconvenience. A wagon body had to be lifted off the wheels and placed on the ground near a bin. The fanning-mill was placed inside of it, and the wheat run from the bin as needed into a pail or half bushel measure. At intervals, as cleaned and collected in the wagon body, it was shoveled into cotton wove sacks, which at that time cost a dollar apiece. Each sack held a little over two bushels and eighteen of them made a fair load. The cleaning job over, the body had to be placed back on the wheels, and the axles having been greased, the sacks were loaded into it and were now ready for the trip to Lansing, which took the most of two days to go and return with horse teams. During those times the price of wheat varied considerably, ranging from perhaps 90 cents to \$1.50 per bushel. A part of the crop was marketed in the fall, but many trips being required, much of it remained stored in the bins until after corn-planting time of the next year.

There was no marketing of corn, oats or potatoes, these being used at home, and where sold at all it was to supply someone who had run short. The prairie people got their milling (flour, corn-meal and ground feed) done at Dorchester. The mill there, with two run of stone, did the custom work of the surrounding country and generally there were so many orders ahead that farmers had to leave their grists there and go a second time for the same several days later. In their trips to Lansing and to mill, the people kept themselves supplied with groceries and such household articles as were most needed. Considerable store trading was also done at Caledonia, then about half its present size.

After the ground had been gone over with a marker, corn was planted with hoes. The summer's battle with the weeds over with in cultivating the crop, it was left to mature, and in the fall it was cut and shocked, either ten or twelve hills square to the shock. Through the fall it was hauled up, about as needed, and husked out to be fed to hogs, oxen and horses, and the fodder to the cows. The main work of that season until the ground froze up, was fall plowing, after which as much corn as possible might be hauled in from the fields, but the last of the shocks usually did not get hauled away until early in the spring.

The ridge lands that lay east of the Hanson, Pease and Lapham farms were owned and held at that time by speculators. Though partially open and grassy land, there was much brush and trees upon it, and the bluffs near the Winnebago were timbered with oak. These lands formed a cattle range and while they fed on the ridges they got water at a small spring and pool farther up the Pease ravine than any such place now exists.

Some of the people had brought with them from the east small collections of books, but they had little in that line that was of a later date than 1857. The principal papers taken in the community were the weekly issues of the St. Paul Press, Chicago Tribune and the old home paper called the Woonsocket Patriot. Some miscellaneous publications were also received, including two or three of various ladies' magazines. Daily papers, if any chance copies reached the community at all, were like stray birds of passage, isolated and unusual.

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## CHAPTER V.

### THROUGH THE MIDDLE AND LATER SIXTIES.

IN the spring of 1865 there began something in the way of a re-emigration from Portland Prairie, at least to the extent of several families. Those who went from the prairie at that time located in the vicinity of Cedar Falls, Iowa. One of the first to depart for the new location was Edin Ballou and family. He assigned as a reason for selling out and leaving, the fact that he had suffered so much inconvenience for want of water that he wished to get to a location where the land was good and water easy to obtain. Dr. Batchellor, John G. Cook, Duty and James Paine and Marcius Eddy, all with their families, left for Cedar Falls about that time.

The Edin Ballou eighty was sold to William Hartley for \$1300. Mr. Hartley was a native of Cambridgeshire, England, born in 1815. He came to this country in 1848, locating first at Albany, N. Y., and later at Evansville, Ind., where he resided for seven years. He moved next to the Iowa river where he kept a tavern on the Lansing road. He had something of a mixed family, children by a first wife, and others who were the children of a widow Arnesen whom he married as a second wife. The children were named Eleanor, Mary, Annie, Albert, Jennie and Adelbert.

The Dr. Batchellor and Cook place adjoining, was bought by John McNelly, who, at some later date, improved the house. The house then next west, where John G. Cook had lived, was occupied by Israel Noyes,

who moved over from the Everett neighborhood. He had two daughters who afterwards married two of the Sinclair brothers. The Duty Paine place was bought by Jorgen Schultz, who came over from Germany that spring, and had a family. The James Paine place was sold to the widow Ann Sneesby, who was sister to the Robinson brothers. The children of this family were named Alice, James, George and Effie.

It was remarked at that time that such buildings as the prairie farms then chanced to possess added nothing to the value of the land; that with or without them the farms that were being sold would have brought much the same price. It was further said by some, that if they had the means to build a good house on a place that they contemplated selling, they would not do it. The community had now been fairly well settled for about ten years, though some had been there for longer and some for shorter intervals. In the time passed, the people had bettered themselves mainly in such rise in the value of land as had ensued, rather than in any other way. And that was the most that could be looked for under the wheat-raising system. Every farmer, too, in those days, was to a greater or less extent, in debt.

On the 4th of July, 1865, both the German and American people joined together for a picnic. There stood at the time an unfinished German church a quarter of a mile south of the road corners where Eitzen now is, that had been built the previous year. Although not wholly completed, the building was in shape so that services could be held in it. The Fourth of July gathering was held in a pleasant grove not far to the east of the church. The day was fine, and probably between two



and three hundred people were assembled there, among whom were a few civil war soldiers, recently mustered out of service. David P. Temple made the address of the occasion. Among other things he emphasized the fact that this was the first national anniversary in the history of the country that it could truly be said that this was a free land, since hitherto, under the slave regime in the South, the nation had been free only in name. He was followed by the Lutheran minister who spoke in German. Rev. White of the Caledonia Circuit also made a brief address. The free-for-all picnic dinner at improvised long tables now took place. Later in the afternoon the Lutheran minister got together a class of boys and standing in a row they sang in German what seemed to be church songs. As the afternoon waned the assemblage began dispersing to their homes, both in teams and on foot.

Down to this time there was not a mile of railroad in Houston County, and at the close of 1864 there had been built only 100 miles in the state, in part radiating from St. Paul; but with increasing mileage this isolated system was not connected with any eastern lines until 1868. In 1864 a line was completed from Winona to Rochester, 50 miles. In the fall of 1865 a railroad was started from the Mississippi, just above the mouth of Root river, thence up the valley of Root river and through the north part of the county. This line was called the Southern Minnesota Railroad. Sixteen miles of track were laid that fall and next year the road was built to Rushford, 30 miles west of the river, which was the end of the track for the next two years. But this line was too far away to open any new market for Portland Prairie.

On the farms the year was fairly a good one. In the fall several farmers on the prairie concluded to try sheep, and hence purchased moderate sized flocks of McRoberts of La Crescent, who had imported large herds to sell in lots to any farmers who had the means to buy them.\* The final outcome of the matter appeared to demonstrate that the same amount of money, had it been expended in lumber for buildings, would have been a wiser use of it, or the same might be said in regard to

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\* About the middle of September, 1865, the writer, then a boy of seventeen, accompanied Chas. F. Albee to La Crescent on a sheep-driving trip. He was returning a flock that he had been pasturing and wanted a boy and saddle-horse so as to change alternately every few miles between driving on foot or in the saddle. I was sent on a horse to get the saddle, but found that his son Edgar was away with it looking up cows. This caused a long delay and I did not overtake Mr. Albee until in the afternoon some miles beyond Caledonia, when both were glad to change places. We put up that night at the Valley tavern, within three miles of Hokah. Starting early next morning, we pushed on to La Crescent. Just beyond Hokah we saw a large pile of railroad iron that had been brought up Koot river in barges, and men were at work grading the S. M. R. R. McRoberts had gone over into La Crosse, and having yarded the sheep, we went across the river bottom to a ferry landing and thence by boat to La Crosse.

La Crosse in 1865 (this was Sept. 14th) was not much like what it is now. The place extended back from the river only a few blocks. There was only one railroad in there then and the station buildings and end of the track were on the north side of a broad marshy basin (now largely filled in) and reached by a long wagon bridge. Above the railroad terminal and yards lay the village of North La Crosse, maintained by several near by lumber-mills along Black river.

Having found McRoberts, we returned with him to La Crescent. The afternoon and part of the next day was spent picking out a flock of sheep. Wm. B. Johnson of the Winnebago Valley was also there to get sheep, and had a boy named William Lee with him who had been brought up in his family. We looked after the sheep as separated from a large herd. Johnson departed first with his flock, and Albee followed later in the afternoon. We stopped that night at the Valley tavern and reached the prairie with the sheep the next afternoon.

introducing a better breed of hogs than the kind commonly raised in that part of the country at that time. Prairie people were not prepared to raise sheep, either in respect to land seeded to grass, buildings or fences. Straw sheds of the sort already described had to be built to shelter them. After two years trial it became evident that keeping sheep in their case was productive of more care, bother and damage than of profit, and consequently all who had gone into the business, with the exception of Mr. Yeaton, got out of it as well as they could.

As had been the case early in November of the preceding year, so again about the same time of the month in 1865, a snowstorm from the northeast covered the ground with at least eight inches of snow, which, however melted off within a week. On one of these two occasions, what seemed curious, the St. Paul Press stated that it appeared from reports received from La Crosse that they had about a foot of snow down there, while at St. Paul no snow had fallen, and that they were enjoying pleasant weather there instead. In after years it must have become known to the Weather Bureau, as it did to commercial travelers, that there stretches from Lake Michigan southwesterly toward Nebraska, a belt of country a hundred miles, more or less, in breadth, within which snow is apt to fall, not every year, but occasionally, late in October or early in November. This strip of country, which crosses Houston County, the traveling men came to call the "snow-belt."

The winter of 1865-6, though rather cold, was more marked in its latter half by the great depth of snow that fell. This, wind storms piled into the roads, and along some stretches, as high as the top rails of fences.

Opposite the deeper filled portions of the roads, teams had to take to the fields for longer or shorter distances. The deep snow lasted all through March. The 31st of that month was a moderate day with a south wind, but not quite warm enough to start a sudden thaw with torrents running down the ravines; yet the night following brought what the day had not. About midnight a terrific downpour of rain with lightning and thunder ensued. The lightning flashed almost incessantly and the clouds must have been low, since each vivid flash was followed, not by rolling thunder, but by loud and sharp explosions, resembling the firing of cannon. All of the ravines leading from the prairie became rushing torrents. Many bridges in that part of the country were swept away, including the Iowa river bridge on the road to Lansing. Most of the snow was swept off, but where it had drifted against fences, these remains later froze hard and did not wholly disappear until late in April.

The south eighty of Wright's quarter had never been cultivated or fenced along the road on the township line. The road through the north eighty then continued straight on up a gentle rise of the ground until near C. F. Albee's land when it curved to the east and joined the townline road at the point where the one that runs down Tippery ravine begins. In the spring of 1866 Frederick Theis, who had been living in the south part of Wilmington, moved a building on to the east forty of the uncultivated eighty mentioned, which he had bought, and fitted it up for a house. He broke and fenced the land and had the road changed to the quarter-section line where it now runs, so far as to border his place,

The same spring L. L. Lapham put up a large barn on his premises and in place where a different one now stands. It had no frame of hewn oak timbers but was framed instead of scantling and joist materials, such as would be used in building a house. It was provided with a commodious hay-mow or loft and basement part. Wm. H. Going went on to what is now the H. Weibke place about that time and built a house on it just north of the road that runs down Tippery ravine. Hitherto the land had lain unfenced and uncultivated.

R. E. Shumway moved that summer from the old log cabin near the state line to the Cook house then on the McNelly place. This brought the postoffice one mile nearer to a part of the community.

On the Fourth of July of that year the people of the prairie held their picnic at the point where the road to Lansing crosses the Oneota or Upper Iowa river, eight or or nine miles distant. In those times scarcely anyone in the whole neighborhood possessed such a thing as a buggy or any other light rig for family use. Family parties or other groups of persons had to travel to such gatherings in common farm wagons, if too far away to go on foot. Many teams of the prairie people journeyed down to the river, the day being a favorable one. The bridge there, swept away the previous spring, had not been rebuilt, but the teams easily crossed at a gravelly ford just above where it had stood. A flat boat had been used for a ferry when the water was higher than in its summer stage. The picnic was held in a grove close to the river and a little above the bridge piers. Quite a large assemblage of people were present, some portion of them presumably from that neighborhood.



This year was not as prosperous on some accounts as the preceding one had been. An early frost injured the corn crop where it had been planted late in the season. The Colorado beetle or potato bug, began to attract attention that year as a pest to potato vines. The first snow of the season came on the last day of October, but only about two inches deep.

That year Joseph Winkelman took up his residence on the prairie, coming from La Crescent to manage the widow Everett place. He was born in Germany February 13, 1838, and came to Wisconsin with his parents when fifteen years of age. That fall Geo. M. Watson, Frank Healy and Geo. T. Shumway and probably Winkelman were running a threshing-machine. Geo. M. Watson came to the prairie from New Portland, Maine, the previous year and at first worked on Yeaton's place. He married Lucy Arnold Christmas day, 1866, and took charge of the Arnold farm.

Rev. White had now been three years on the Caledonia Circuit. In the fall of 1866 he was succeeded by Rev. John W. Klepper, a younger man, a native of Illinois, born in 1834. In the following winter he held protracted meetings in the McNelly school house, some of the young people of the community joining the church society after the usual probationary period. It may be worth while to remark here, that in the forty and more years that have passed since those school house preaching services, many views then voiced therein have been abandoned as obsolete and untenable by all educated clergymen of the Methodist Church.

The Lansing road, as it was called in those times, runs east from the corners at the McNelly school house



one mile on the line of sections 30 and 31, Winnebago township; thence it gains the center of Section 32 by south and east quarter mile stretches. At that point there are other road corners, one road continuing east as a ridge road and the main or Lansing road turning southward through what was then the Everett neighborhood. At the southwest corner of the roads stood the log house of Spafford Williams, and several other houses stood near the roads within a quarter of a mile. Thos. Biggs, a blacksmith, had put up a shop a short distance east of Williams' place in 1862. On the road south was the German church built in 1864. There was probably a school house east of the corners in the year under discussion. The Williams family had now moved to Caledonia; and other old-time settlers of the vicinity had also gone, Germans having bought their places. Sometime in 1867, Christian Bunge Jr., whose father was located on a farm some distance east on the ridge road, opened a store in the log cabin. A chapel had also been built east of the store during the previous year and two or three houses were added to the place, with a postoffice in the store the year following, all of which made a beginning to the village of Eitzen.

In the sixties the people of the prairie had a custom of observing the Fourth of July by picnic assemblages at different localities. In 1867 the grove either on or adjoining the Schultz place was again used for holding the picnic and we think also again next year, but we are not positive on that point.

Beginning in 1866, when Lapham put up the barn on his place that has been mentioned, new and much needed buildings began to be added to the prairie farms, by

this or that person as they chanced to be able to build. Each year now saw a granary, a barn or new house built in the community, or more than one of each kind. Some dwellings were made larger by building on additions. In the summer of 1867 the Wright school house was built on a parcel of ground either donated or bought of Mr. Wright and in a corner of his land made by the road. As first built, a door in the center of the east end opened into entrys with two inner doors opening into the school room. The pupils sat facing east. Late in the fall a school opened in the building, Miss Ellen Healy keeping the first or winter term, having some twenty pupils.

Chas. F. Albee built a substantial granary a few rods north of the house he then lived in, and near the road. It was twelve feet posted so as to allow a loft above for a sleeping place for hired men.

We have spoken of a quarter-section (the southeast Section 13) north of the Arnold farm as yet uncultivated. About the time arrived at, this quarter having been bought by Horace Arnold, was soon transferred by him to several other parties. E. C. Arnold bought the southeast forty and had his house moved to it; the forty next north of it was bought by a Norwegian named Searns Nelson who put up a house on it near the townline road. The west eighty of this quarter was transferred to the Sinclair brothers who built a house on it near its south end, about twenty rods east of the road corner at what was then Hartley's place. These several parties broke up the quarter and brought it under cultivation. About that time James Hanson, one of the five brothers, went on to the eighty next north of Hartley's place and put in the walls of a basement to a house on the north side

of a shallow ravine a quarter of a mile directly north of Hartley's house, and this he roofed over and occupied several years until he could build a framed dwelling on the basement walls. But no house stands there now.

Thus far along the prairie farmers had to depend on the grist-mill at Dorchester to get their grinding done. About 1861 a man at the Winnebago Valley named Ensign McDonald put up a small stone-built mill just at the north side of the mouth of Tippery ravine. He was not able to equip the mill with machinery and the war coming on, nothing was done with it for about seven years. In 1867 a new mill, also stone-built, was erected on the creek about a mile below the other by Beck Brothers, who were from Pennsylvania. The upper mill was now purchased by Rose & McMillen, and late in the fall both mills were got in running order. McMillen had, for some time previously, been the hired miller at Dorchester. The upper mill had one run of stone only; the larger lower mill two, one set for flour and the other for grinding corn-meal and feed. At any time for several years previously a mill on Winnebago creek would have had a good custom.

The fall of 1867 was mild and pleasant, that sort of weather continuing until long into November, since the fall plowing held out to the day before Thanksgiving on which day the ground had frozen up.

The breeds of stock raised on the farms in those years was of the common western kind such as usually accompanied the wheat raising as a principle crop. Few or no attempts were made to improve the breeds of hogs; as for cattle, cows and steers, they were said to have become "bred in and out" owing to so much free range.

In 1868, what is now the body part of the house on the Wright place was built, Mr. Wright having down to that year continued to live in the original log cabin on the same site. Some time previously a wind-storm blew over a tall oak on the south side of the cabin, its top falling into a tree on the north side, so that the trunk and lower branches came in contact with the roof of the cabin, partially crushing it in. Mr. Wright then built a woodshed and lived in that while the new house was being erected. An addition was built on the north side of Leonard Albee's house the same year.

The present McNelly school house was also built in 1868, and without at first removing the old one. The new building was put in close west of the other. The entrance door was placed near the southwest corner, so as to open directly into the schoolroom to one side of the teacher's desk. After the building had been completed in June it was used in which to hold church services, and in fact, the first service of any kind to be held in the building was the public funeral service of Wesley Albee, son of Leonard Albee, who died July 5, 1868, Rev. J. W. Klepper preaching the sermon. The old school house remained in place where it had stood for a little over ten years, until the next winter, when, having been bought by Esten Olson, it was moved over to his place a mile or more farther west.

During the same year R. E. Shumway moved the house he then lived in to his present place, which earlier had been part of the Metcalf farm. This brought the postoffice to the townline road and more centrally for the community in general, than when the house stood to the west of the McNelly residence.

W. R. Ballou was still about the prairie at times and had been so since war years, but with occasional long absences at the east. About the time the Winnebago mills were put in operation he located near the upper one, yet worked at the prairie more or less in the warm season putting up barns, granaries and sometimes additions to houses. The Wright school house had been built under his charge, and in 1868 he put up a granary at the Arnold place. His forty around the end of the ridge, he had transferred to the Sinclair brothers. Mr. Ballou was a widower, his wife having died in Burrillville, R. I., September 6, 1854. He had one son, Oscar B., born September 19, 1853, and who at the time now referred to was living at Leonard Albee's place.

Frank Healy married Esther E. Pease, oldest daughter of Hosea W. Pease, April 8, 1868, and they went to live on the Marcy place which Mr. Healy had bought. Mrs. Marcy had died the previous year and Mr. Marcy and his son Albert had moved away; Ada Marcy married Alexander Batchellor Jr., and the couple were living in Iowa, several miles from Cedar Falls.

Hitherto the surplus wheat raised on the prairie farms had been carted to Lansing as the most available market town on the river, and in like manner farmers through the central part of the county journeyed to Brownsville, unless, in some cases, they went to points on the S. M. railroad. In 1868 a stone-built warehouse for receiving wheat was put up on the banks of a slough about a mile north of the site of New Albin which was then a farm. A store and a house or two was built near the warehouse and lumber to sell to farmers was barged in there. A man named Hayes and Wm. Robinson were chiefly

interested in the place, which was commonly called the "New Landing." There was not space enough there at the foot of the bluff for much of a place to grow up, while "Ross' bench" across both the Winnebago creek and the Iowa state line, was a natural town site. After a fitful existence of about four years, the building of the west side river line of railroad and starting of the village of New Albin, caused the "landing" to be abandoned.

About 1869, possibly in the spring of that year, the county commissioners came from Caledonia to view and to decide on the location of a piece of road in Section 24. The cross-road from the Wright corners over to the west road hitherto had no existence. Nor did the west road pass up on to the ridge where it runs now up the east side of a spur of the ridge. Instead, after passing by Frank Healy's (now Stigen's) place, it continued north-erly by the east end of Yeaton's log cabin and thence turned up on to the top of the ridge, near where the house of the place now stands under the ridge. There was then a roadway on the top of the ridge to its eastern termination. It descended off the ridge at the south-eastern shoulder, crossed the ground south of the Arnold house of that time and joined the main road near the Wright school house. The road from the Wright corners over to the west road having been established, that on the eastern part of the ridge was abandoned so far as no longer needed, and the ground it had crossed became fenced in. At that time new fences were much made of posts and pine fence-boards, and some of the old rail fences had begun to be replaced by them.

In the old days two large "lone trees" were standing well up on either shoulder of the ridge and on the farm



of Amos Arnold. That at the north shoulder was a tall birch tree with a trunk much over a foot in diameter; the other was a full-grown black oak. Both trees, in coming from the north or south, could be seen at long distances away and formed landmarks. The birch was blown down during the Civil war, and the oak also fell in a storm many years afterwards.

During 1869 several persons on the prairie united to take "Harper's Weekly," the leading illustrated paper of that period; a larger number were taking during the later sixties the "New York Ledger," which for many years past had been the leading story paper of the country. At the same time many of the young people of the community rejoiced over the weekly visits of "The Youth's Companion," a publication started by Nathaniel P. Willis in 1826. St. Paul and Chicago weeklies were still taken in the community. Many too, who had come from Rhode Island or the adjacent part of Massachusetts, took the "Woonsocket Patriot," their "old home paper" and an excellent family weekly in its time. Of course a few other publications reached the community, such as some copies of a farmer's paper, one or two religious publications, and one or two ladies' magazines. During 1863 several persons took Harper's Magazine, but no later issues, we think, had since been seen in the community. The numerous magazines of present times were then, nearly all of them, unborn. From year to year, as before, no daily papers were seen there.

The prairie people appear to have been invited to come to Caledonia to spend the Fourth of July, 1869. Quite a number of them went up to that village on that day, which was a favorably pleasant one. The general

picnic, which we think, was of the basket kind, each family party bringing their own provisions, was held in a fine grove of large poplars south of where St. Peters church now stands. If we remember correctly, a stand for speakers and a platform for a bowery dance was used there. The village had not changed much since war time. On all sides around where there are either new streets or extensions of old ones, were then fenced fields or a few scattered buildings. The court-house was then a two story wooden building; there were four small wooden-built churches in the place, and several stores and saloons, and one printing office. We do not think that the place then contained a single stone-built or brick building.

The year was a fair one for crops on the farms. Mr. Yeaton had kept his sheep and had a large flock on his hands. He said that if he kept them he would have to have a wider range of pasture. The Everetts had already emigrated to Burt County, Nebraska, and so Mr. Yeaton decided to sell out and locate in the same then new section of country. He had his sheep driven to that state and in the fall a largely attended auction was held at his place and stock, farm machinery, etc, disposed of to good advantage. The farm was sold to Cornelius Metcalf Jr., who soon occupied it, leaving the old place to his father and brother David. David Metcalf had married Florence Yeaton about the time here under consideration. Mr. Yeaton had not done much to improve buildings on the place while he owned it; a shed-roofed addition had been built to the old log house; yet much money and labor had been expended on post-and-board fences and in breaking land on the top of the ridge.

In the fall of 1869 Jeremiah Shumway purchased of Charles Albee the south eighty of his quarter-section, and in the spring of 1870 he prepared to leave the old place near the state line and occupy the other. First a granary with a walled under part was built and the family occupied that while a new house with an ell part was being built a few rods north of it.

There was some other building on the prairie that year; Leonard Albee and Mr. Cass had barns built on their places, and A. Arnold an ell to the west side of his house. These three jobs were in charge of W. R. Ballou who had been living for some years at the Winnebago Valley and near the upper mill. The same year Fred Ruhe built a house on the south side of the road about a half mile east of the McNelly school house.

George T. Shumway married Florence E. Henderson, a former school teacher in the community, April 3, 1870, and they were living at the Nelson Coil place above Dorchester. Mr. Shumway took the contract to carry the mail twice a week between Dorchester and Brownsville, beginning July 1st. J. Shumway took charge of it most of the time, though young persons\* in the employment of one of the other of the brothers, were gen-

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\* One of these chanced to be the publisher of this pamphlet. In 1870 Brownsville was experiencing good times. There was no railroad nearer than the Southern Minnesota to cut off back country trade. It was the principal gateway from the river to Caledonia. The place had three hotels, several stores, two elevators, a church or two, two breweries, a small steam saw-mill, and a grist-mill on Wildcat creek. In the boating season the packets made landings every day and numerous ratt-steamer frequently passed the place either pushing the great rafts of pine logs down stream or making their return trips, seldom ever making any stop there. That was the year of the Franco-Prussian war, and the hotels had daily papers.

erally on the road either in a light rig or on horseback. The postoffice still remained at Rufus Shumway's place. On the Fourth of July many of the prairie people went to a celebration of the day at Dorchester, no attempt having been made toward any home picnic affair.

Rev. J. W. Klepper had been succeeded in the fall of 1868 by Rev. James Door who was on the circuit only one year. Under his ministry several persons united with the local church society, which at that time and in the early seventies reached the full measure of its prosperity. The Sunday School was well attended by the young folks and held its sessions in the forenoon during the hour preceding the regular service. The meetings were held each alternate Sabbath, but the Sunday School convened each Sunday in the warm months. It had quite a Bible class of young people, taught by D. P. Temple, who was a Presbyterian, and well educated man. The Sunday School library had not been improved much, and might and should have been better than it was for those years. The society being Methodist, class-meetings succeeded the preaching service, Leonard Albee being the class leader. They were thought more of in the denomination then than now, having since largely been abandoned as an institution that has been outgrown. Once or twice each year a presiding-elder came and held quarterly-meetings. On these occasions the school house was filled to its full capacity.

Rev. Door was succeeded by Rev. A. M. Stevens. Before the conference year ended his voice failed him and he had to retire from the ministry. One or two transient preachers came, followed by Rev. Linderman Wright.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### PORTLAND PRAIRIE IN THE SEVENTIES.

ONLY about fifteen years had now elapsed since the prairie had began to be fairly well, though not entirely, occupied. Some thirty American families had come in the fifties, and others later along, but considerable change had already ensued through re-emigration, as has been noted. Those brought into the community as children in the early days were now becoming young men and women and hence marriages were seemingly more frequent during the decade here reached than formerly. The real "old times" of any western settlement are naturally those of the active years of the first generation of settlers, since the times following, when their grand-children are growing up, are certain to have become changed in many respects.

In the later sixties the question sometimes came up as to the probability of a railroad up and down the west bank of the Mississippi river, say between Dubuque and St. Paul. On one occasion, the subject being remarked upon in the postoffice, the elder Mr. Metcalf replied that such would certainly be the case sometime in the future, but that he could not hope to see its consummation in his days. Years afterwards the writer reminded Mr. Metcalf that he had lived to know that both sides of the river had been banded by steel rails. One hundred miles of part of one of the river lines was built from St. Paul to Winona in 1869-71. In 1870 it was reported that a company would build north from Dubuque along

the west side of the river. During the year 1871 this road was graded as far or about to the state line, and the track laid to Yellow river, some miles north of McGregor. In those times Lansing had grown to a considerable sized town, with a number of brick buildings on its main street, and it had such industrial establishments as flour mills, lumber mills, a wagon factory, a furniture manufactory, a brick-yard, machine-shop, etc.

To return to prairie matters. During the summer of 1871 H. P. Kelly tore down his log house and built a large framed one with an ell, in its place. A carpenter named Alonzo Preston lived southwest from Leonard Albee's place during the first half of that decade and worked at his trade, among other jobs having charge of building Kelly's house, where Lewis Haar resides now. Nelson Preston came earlier than his brother and left the place about 1872. Down to the time now reached there were few buggies or any sort of light wagons owned in the community. The use of the common farm wagon was still the ordinary method of getting from one place to another. At about this time the women had their sewing-society and were accustomed to meet at one house or another at least once each month.

In 1871 a map of Houston County was published and on a scale large enough to include the names of owners of land in each section of the townships. We shall take in order the sections adjoining in Wilmington and Winnebago townships, four sections in each north and south, and proceed to specify the owners of the land in each section. The tract thus covered comprises eight square miles, or the most of Portland Prairie and also some of the ravine-and-ridge lands.



## EXPLANATION.

Only about seventy copies for this work have been printed. Each sheet contains four pages, and in the final make-up of the printed sheets for binding it was found that eight sheets representing pages 73-76 were lacking, and consequently eight copies out of the whole number of the pamphlets printed would be minus those four pages, unless the type for them was again re-set and the printing for the missing sheets gone over again. This we have done for the two first pages of each sheet, but we do not think it worth while to reproduce the map record and added remarks merely for making complete the last eight copies of the pamphlet. This would involve too much labor. Moreover much the same record of land ownership in the eight sections listed, may be found on pages 89, 90, as cited from a plat-book of 1878. Between 1871 and 1878, only a few changes of ownership of farms had taken place in these eight sections.

Not to make a break at the top of page 77, we reproduce below the last two lines that in the complete copies occur at the bottom of page 76:—

In confining this survey to an area four miles long and two miles wide, the names of some persons whose



farms were in adjoining sections, but who nevertheless were of the community, find no mention. On the west border of the specified area were farms of H. P. Kelley, Arnold Stone, a forty of Frank Healy, and west of that James D. Emerson's place, F. Meitrodt, other land of Esten Olson, and the Sinclair or Vreeland place. James Vreeland had moved to Lansing in the later sixties.

The village of Eitzen was growing a little. A church was built there in 1871. Conrad Laufer built a tavern there the same year. C. Bunge was keeping store and the postoffice in a framed building that had replaced the old log house. There was a wagon and blacksmith shop at the place, also a stone-built school house. Samuel Evans, Geo. Carver, and perhaps Joseph Melvin, appear to have been the only American settlers left in that neighborhood, though Jones and Graves were still at their places on the ridge.

During the spring and summer of 1872 the river line of railroad was pushed northward to La Crescent where it joined a line of 28 miles built south from Winona by the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Company. The new line from Dubuque to La Crescent was called the Chicago, Dubuque & Minnesota Railroad, but for short was spoken of as the "C. D. & M." Ultimately it became part of the Milwaukee system. When the track reached the Ross bench in May, a town was laid out there which the railroad company named New Albin. This made a market within fourteen miles of Portland Prairie, to which farmers could drive and return the same day. A number of the children born at the prairie now saw a railroad, cars and locomotives for the first time. But since 1868 the county had been circled around by rails.

William Robinson died in the fall of 1872 and having previously become incapacitated, a family who were relatives of Mrs. Robinson came to look after the place. The head of the family was named Daniel D. Smith. He had two boys, Dania and Fred, aged at this time about fifteen and five years.

Rev. Linderman Wight was on the circuit one year and in the fall of 1871 he was succeeded by Rev. Henry C. Jennings, a young man who had but recently entered the ministry. Rev. Jennings was born in Illinois in 1850, and received a theological education at Evanston. He appeared to be as broad-minded in general, as some of his predecessors and successors were the reverse, for at that time a large number of representatives of the old school of Methodism of the Peter Cartwright cast, were still in active service. Moreover, at that time, the new nineteenth century knowledge that was being accumulated, destined to produce many changes of opinion among the well-read classes as to old-time views, were rather slow in being diffused through country districts. In January, 1873, Rev. Jennings held a notable revival which mainly affected the young people of the community, and after the usual probationary period resulted in increasing the membership of the church society to a marked extent.

During this decade there was less attention given to the observance of the Fourth of July than formerly.\* On that day in 1873 there was light rain in the forenoon

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\* The publisher of this pamphlet was absent in eastern Connecticut from November, 1870 to May, 1873, and does not remember what he may have been informed by letter in regard to any picnic gatherings possibly held in the years 1871 and 1872.

and no picnic having been planned the people remained at their homes. The afternoon being fair, a number of the young people went to the Cass place to use a swing.

A mail route was maintained during most of this decade from Waukon to Caledonia, hence that part of the Brownsville route between the prairie and Dorchester was taken into the other. In the warm months Herbert P. Shumway, oldest son of J. Shumway, often drove the mail, but winters he attended high or academic schools and later on the state university.

During the year Alonzo Preston worked about the prairie in the carpentering line. He built that season a body part to the house of E. C. Arnold (the smaller old part being remodeled into an ell) and also a porch around the body part to A. Arnold's house. The first drilled wells on the prairie were put down that summer. These at first were not very deep ones; thus one at the Arnold place drilled 34 feet in the bottom of a stoned up well which was about thirty feet deep, and as the water rose 30 feet in the drill-hole, it furnished what was needed at that time.

Isaac Gault, who had been around the prairie for 13 years, left in the summer and settled in Oregon; Elijah and Abram Sinclair moved to Nebraska; in the fall Wm. H. Going sold his place to Henry Weibke, who had been in the country since 1856, and moved to the same state. Along about that time David P. Temple sold his place to Geo. Cass and also moved to Nebraska, as so many others had done and were doing. The next winter Amos Lapham sold his farm to Adam Flessa and after a summer spent in Massachusetts himself and wife located in Caledonia.

In November, 1873, some of the young folks of the community became interested in arranging and planning for a winter term at school in Caledonia. Wm. Belden had arranged to open an academic school there, and as a goodly portion of the students were to attend from the surrounding country, they had now to arrange to board themselves there at least five days in each week while the term continued. On Friday evenings the students would be taken to their homes. Different persons used to carry the prairie students back and forth in that way in horse teams. Of those that were students from the prairie that first winter we recall Herbert P. and Viola P. Shumway, Emily Albee, Martha Paine, Wm. Cass Jr., Mary Evans, Samantha Wright, H. Franklin Arnold, and possibly there were one or two others. At a later date others attended the Caledonia Academy, as they became old enough to do so. Those mentioned now became intimate with students from other communities whom they either had not known before or had only occasionally seen.

Rev. Jennings left the circuit in the fall of 1873 and was succeeded for the next two years by Rev. Aaron Matson, an elderly clergyman, a native of Ohio, born in 1823. Evidently he had absorbed none of the current new ideas of the age, for many of his views of facts and doctrine have since been abandoned by all well educated Methodist clergymen.

Temple's house had stood gable end to the road, just across east from J. Shumway's house. In 1874 George Cass turned the house about to front the road and built on an addition. He had married Ellen Healy, January 8, 1870, and had two small children at this time.



It was probably during the Christmas holiday season of 1874, when the young folks were at home from school (for those mentioned as going to Caledonia attended the academy more than one winter term) that Rev. H. C. Jennings came from Chatfield, Minn., and delivered in the McNelly school house a lecture which he called "Memories of the Middle Ages." He said he had become an interested student of history and had put the salient points of the period mentioned into lecture form. This effort was well attended, fairly interesting and well delivered. He had previously delivered the same lecture at Caledonia.

Martha and Amy Paine, daughters of James M. Paine who had formerly resided at Portland Prairie, were now in the community again, living with relatives. In the spring of 1875 James Sayles Paine, a brother of the Paine sisters, and aged seventeen, came up from Iowa and worked that season for Geo. Cass. At first he stopped at J. Shumway's. Trifling incidents often set going larger movements. It chanced that "Sayles," as he was called, brought a base-ball with him, which was soon in use one evening after chores were done and before it got too dark, in playing pitch and catch with some of the Shumway boys. Later others joined these, and with bats and more balls, a round of base-ball playing was inaugurated by the young men of the community, and by others not so young. It became customary that season to meet on each Saturday afternoon in a field west of C. Albee's house, where the grass was fed down, for base-ball practises.

Now when the people at Pope's Prairie became cognizant of these doings, they started games going in their

community, and next in regular order came match games between picked nines of both communities, each ending with a dinner for all, including spectators of both sexes, no small number, though not so large as the Fourth of July gatherings. We recall two such occasions, one for each community. At the prairie the meet was on Geo. Cass' land; on the occasion at Pope's Prairie the dinner in the afternoon was given on the floor of a large new barn, a little to the west of the main road.

Connected with these ball games of the summer came an observance of Independence day wherein the people of Pope's Prairie joined those of Portland Prairie in holding a grove picnic. The 4th of July, 1875, fell on Sunday, so that the gathering took place on Saturday. There was then a grove of large poplars and small oaks southeast of the A. Arnold house, adjoining Wright's eighty and about fifty rods east of the road. This was cleared up, a long table of boards provided and a swing was put up between two suitable trees. The forenoon was cloudy and threatened rain, but toward noon the sun appeared and the rest of the day was fair and warm. The people of Pope's Prairie having arrived, those of the home community rapidly gathered for an observance like some of those of previous years. After the picnic dinner most of the men went to a level piece of ground just east of where G. M. Watson's lower barn now stands either to engage in a game of base-ball or to witness the same as spectators.

Just as the joint picnic of two communities in a large measure grew out of the ball games of that season, so in turn the picnic gathering suggested another of a different character in the same place, for Sunday, July 18th.

Among those present at the picnic were Rev. Aaron Matson and family. The occasion and place suggested to Mr. Matson the idea of a grove meeting and while many were out to the ball ground he talked the matter over with those remaining in the grove, also later at the house from which the people of Pope's Prairie departed in their teams toward evening. So it was arranged to hold a grove meeting. The Sunday mentioned was a very fair day and people came to this unique religious service from Caledonia, Pope's Prairie, Winnebago Valley and of course from all around in the home community. At least two hundred people were present. We think there were forenoon and afternoon services, a certain Rev. Rogers preaching the sermons, assisted by Rev. Matson.

While Rev. Rogers was in the community he took the occasion to organize a temperance lodge at the McNelly school house, and he explained the matter to the people on the occasion of the grove meeting. Some of the grown people joined in the movement, but in general, the organization was maintained for a little over two years by the young people to whom any such institution of a minor and usually transient character, was new and novel. Their meetings were held at the school house Saturday evenings, at first weekly, and later every other week. It may truly be said that along in the middle seventies the prairie community had on the whole an interesting class of young folks, about fifty in number, ranging in age from twelve upward to twenty or more. And here it may be observed, what is already apparent, that these movements influencing young and old since spring, grew out of a ball brought into the community.

In the fall of 1875, Charles F. Albee built the house now on the place, the lumber having been hauled from New Albin. The body and ell were both built at the same time. The old house had stood on the same site, but was moved back and used for a woodshed and a place to keep implements. The old log barn across the road stood for some years longer.

Late in the fall Rev. Aaron Matson was assigned by the conference to some other circuit, and for the conference year 1875-6 no minister was returned to the Caledonia Circuit. The people of the prairie took that opportunity to build a church of a size adequate to the community and on land donated by Geo. Cass. It was built in the summer of 1876, largely by subscription, but considerable work was also contributed in various ways, such as hauling stone for the foundation, lumber and other materials, some carpentering and lathing work. Dr. Ambler of New Albin, and a Mr. Hall of Caledonia, sometimes acted as itinerant preachers, and one or the other probably first preached in the new building. In November Rev. W. M. Bowdish was assigned to the circuit and remained two years.

There was not much doing on the prairie that year besides some building.\* Cornelius Metcalf Jr. erected

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\* There being no Fourth of July celebration at the prairie that year, the writer with H. F. Arnold, Martin Taylor and William Lee went to La Crosse. The speaking was in a German beer-garden and Robert Collyer of Chicago made the principal address.—A few persons went from Caledonia to the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia that year; the writer also went from Portland Prairie. Going in September, tickets in La Crosse were then \$39.40 for the round trip and good for sixty days. There was also a variety of routes from which to make a choice, going by one route and returning by another. The writer was enabled to again visit the southern New England states.

a large house on his place and in the base of the ridge; however, it was not finished off inside so as to be occupied for about two years. To the south a quarter of a mile or more, Frank Healy put up a building on the east side of the road, called a granary, but it had a hay-loft above and a stable in a basement below. The hay was passed down through the granary part into the mangers in closed vertical chutes. The building is not there in present times.

About this time the farmers of the prairie began to possess themselves of open buggies and in some cases light two-seated wagons. These were much better to get around in than the ordinary farm wagon. The days of covered carriages had not yet come, so far as the prairie community was concerned. Wood for the season was hauled in winter and early in the spring was sawn and chopped up for stove use. This practise had been more or less general through the decade. Each place had one or two hired men, when large boys were lacking in a family, and the former were usually young men hired for the season, and who came from Iowa or Wisconsin.\*

As has been said, the young folks who had been or were still attending the school at Caledonia had formed friendships with others of their age belonging to other communities. This led to pleasant interchanges of visits along in the middle seventies, Martin Taylor and sisters of Pope's Prairie, Myron Butterfield of Union, and a few others occasionally making visits at the prairie.

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\* Some of these young men around the prairie in the middle and later seventies were named Thos. McKee (came in 1874) Leonard and Robert Oliver, Fred Oben and J. Hopius. Then there were German and Norwegians who worked on the farms. Melvin Yeaton of Nebraska was there more than one season, and J. Sayles Paine.

Sometime before 1877 L. L. Lapham bought a large amount of brick that had been made near the Ross spring, at the foot of the bluffs near New Albin. In the year mentioned the brick house on the Lapham place was erected and in course of time the small framed house near the road which the family had occupied seventeen years, was torn down. That year Chas. F. Wright built on the ell to the north side of his house. It was in the middle seventies, we think, that Mr. W. set out near the road rows of little pines. It was not thought by some that they would ever thrive, but they form quite a grove now, bordering the road.

The observance of the Fourth of July now depended upon whether there was a general agreement in the community to gather for that purpose or not. The grove in which the last picnic was held had been grubbed out the preceding year, the ground plowed, and it was now a field of grain. It was proposed that year to go down to the Iowa river and hold a basket picnic, each family party providing for themselves. There was a meeting in wagons and carriages at the Albee and Shumway places, both near the new church, and then the route taken was the road to Dorchester; passing that place on the east, the creek valley was followed some distance to where a road turned up and over an elevated ridge, from which a descent was made down into the Upper Iowa river valley. A grove between the river road and the stream was occupied by the Mt. Hope people; most of the teams had passed this point, when a Mr. Ratcliffe hastened after them and as he passed different teams he extended an invitation to join this valley community in their observance of the day. After some conference



this cordial invitation was accepted and the procession turned back to the grove and unhitched the horses. Both picnic parties were of about the same number, neither over large, and hitherto any acquaintance had been but casual in some cases. The Mt. Hope party had a platform and organ upon it, so that during part of the afternoon there was music and singing. A number of the boys and young men did not neglect to go over to the river for a swim. The day was pleasant and on the whole there was more pleasure derived from joining parties than could have been had by either singly. As the afternoon waned, the prairie people hitched up their teams, and passing down the valley some distance to the Lansing road, they returned home by that route.

The temperance organization mentioned on a preceding page, having lasted somewhat longer than could have been expected, came to an end by reason of internal dissensions. For a long time adult members, considering it a young folks' affair, had ceased attending its semi-monthly meetings. Nevertheless the lodge flourished. But by September, 1877, it became filled with composite elements, and dissensions arose. A number of the members consequently refused to attend the next meeting, at which about two dozen young men and boys were present. Seeing the trend of things, several ruling spirits conferred among themselves, then one of them named Hophius put in a motion to terminate the lodge. This was generally agreed to and the local organization was declared to be disrupted, and a scene of confusion followed for some time. The matter made talk in the community for a while, but no attempt was ever made to re-instate things.

The winter following, for the most part, was open, wet and muddy. No winter like it had been known in that part of the country since its settlement. It had been a custom to kill hogs in December and after they were dressed to pack them away in straw bins or granaries to freeze up and then cart or sled them to market when prices rose. This method was no longer safe and so a better one came into use at this time, that of placing hog-racks on wagons and transporting the hogs to market and selling them live-weight. Some attention was being given to secure better breeds of hogs, but as to cattle the buyers who annually came around, said that the bluff-and-prairie region of Iowa and Minnesota was backward in growing good stock, and to make fair lots they had to pick the best they could find here and there. John Robinson had for some years been located at New Albin as a buyer and shipper of stock, and G. M. Watson also made the beginning of an extensive business in the same line along in the middle seventies.

Gradually some persons left the prairie for other locations. James Hanson sold his eighty to Wm. Hartley and moved to Douglas County, Minn., where he died a few years later. Horace Arnold and Marcus Stone went to Lake County, Dakota, and others left about that time to look for land if not to stay.

There was no picnic of the prairie people for the 4th of July, 1878, but the day being pleasant some families went on invitation to the Widow Robinson place for an outing. In September a few of the prairie people went up to St. Paul to attend the State Fair for that year, at which on one day President Hayes was present and made an address to the thousands gathered there, his

topic being the financial condition of the nation under his administration. Prof. Henry of the Weather Bureau and a few other officials were of the presidential party.

A plat-book of Houston County was published in 1878. Taking the same sections in Wilmington and Winnebago townships as before noted on pages 75 and 76, and in the same order, it may be observed that some changes had taken place in regard to the ownership of land in each of these sections since 1871, and what the changes had been. In the penciled copy here used we find that we have not noted names of owners of ridge and ravine lands in the two most northern sections and we cannot make these complete, but this will not matter.

#### Section 13, Wilmington.—

South half only; west quarter of same, William Hartley, 160 acres. East quarter, H. Arnold, 70 acres; S. Nelson, 40 acres; E. C. Arnold, 50 acres. (The latter had bought ten acres off the Ole Moen or H. Arnold eighty, while Nelson owned twenty additional acres next north of the forty here listed.)

#### Section 24.—

A. Arnold, 160 acres; C. F. Albee, 40 acres; C. Metcalf, 196 acres; C. F. Wright 80; F. Thiess 80; H. Hannebuth 40, and F. Healy 40 acres. (C. Metcalf had 29 additional acres on the west side of his farm in Section 23. Four acres of his other 200 were deducted for the east and west road, leaving 196.)

#### Section 25.—

C. F. Albee, 80 acres; J. Shumway, 80 acres; H. Hannebuth, 80 acres, O. E. Olsgaard Jr., 120 acres; L. Albee, 120 acres; J. Winkelman, 80 acres; J. McNelly, 80 acres.

#### Section 36.—

J. Guhl 40; J. Schultze 80; Mrs. A. Sneesby 40; J. Myer 80; J. Vreeland 40; A. Hannebuth 80; E. Cook 40; H. Robinson 60; Geo. Robinson 80; and J. Guhl other 60 acres.

## Section 18, Winnebago.—

Southwest quarter, I. & F. E. Hanson, 161 acres. North and northeast of this quarter, N. Reiersen had 80 acres.

## Section 19.—

H. W. Pease, 81 acres; L. L. Lapham, 181 acres; C. Kruger, 120 acres; J. H. Schoh, 40 acres (the most northeast forty of this section); H. Weibke, 61 acres. Southeast quarter, J. H. Schoh, 160 acres. The deduction of twenty acres from Weibke's eighty, forms the south part of the Lapham farm, and existed that way before Going fenced and broke the diminished eighty.

## Section 30.—

J. H. Franzen, 80 acres, ridge land; H. Weibke, a forty next west of the last; C. F. Albee, 40 acres; Geo. Cass, 74 acres; J. M. Schutte, 120 acres; E. D. Carsten, 41 acres; Wm. Cass, 74 acres; R. E. Shumway, 40 acres; D. Metcalf, 100 acres, and C. Flessa, 34 acres. (This section was rather irregularly divided.)

## Section 31.—

In this section names of owners are here listed across the north half from east to west, and in reverse order for the south half. Carsten Estate, the most northeastern forty; E. Ruhe 40 acres next south of the last; D. Metcalf, 80 acres, formerly the Fred Ruhe place; C. Flessa, 80 acres; H. F. Kohlmeier, 80 acres. In the south half of the section the owners were J. Deters, L. Ker-shen, L. Linde and W. Schopper, each eighty acres.

Rev. W. M. Bowdish having now been two years on the Caledonia Circuit, was assigned by the conference to a charge in Fillmore County and an elderly clergyman named W. A. Miles came in his place. During the ministry of Bowdish and Miles two presiding-elders named McKinley and Chaffee held quarterly meetings in the church at different times. Rev. McKinley had visited the community twenty years earlier, in settlement days, when services were held in houses.

Some of the ministers who preached on the circuit prior to 1880, were elderly men who had received their education many years previously, and apparently were unaware of some changes of opinion in regard to certain subjects that had been in progress among the educated classes since the close of the war. There were not lacking those who denounced the reading of newspapers, placing the practise nearly on a par with novel reading and card-playing, and it should be remembered that in those days the prairie people saw no daily papers. Of course such admonitions had little effect. The same class of ministers, or some few of them, held to the "short chronology of the earth" and universality of the deluge with all that such views imply, not being well enough educated to be able to discern how untenable such views were.\* Although practically extinct in cities, large towns and educational centers, many such clerical

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\* Some copies of the "Northwestern Christian Advocate," an organ of the M. E. Church, were taken at the prairie in the sixties and seventies. This publication, commenting on Darwin's centennary, had this to say in its issue of Feb. 10, 1909:—"Dr. Chalmers, in his astronomical discourses, had pointed the way for a sane theology in approaching science, but his way was narrow and steep. The multitude followed leaders like Bishop Wilberforce and tried to shout Lyell and Darwin and Wallace down. As Augustine foresaw and foretold, they made themselves a 'laughing-stock,' not because of their beliefs, but because they were ignorant alike of the developments of theology and of the observations and reasoning of scientific men. One of the chief and most valuable results of Mr. Darwin's book has been the displacement of this noisy company by saner theologians. No theologian of repute would display to-day the ignorance of geology and biology so disgracefully common in 1859."

And the Advocate might also have added "to some extent in 1879."<sup>17</sup> We may observe here the saying that what appears heretical to one generation becomes orthodox to the next, according to a psychological law that engenders progressive variation of opinion.

fossils still survived amidst agricultural populations, and regarded such topics as Evolution, the Antiquity of Man and even Geology as a species of scientific infidelity, which, with the Ingersolism of that time ought to be kept from the knowledge of church people, especially the younger members.

The foregoing remarks are preliminary to the narration of the discussion in the community during the spring and summer of 1879 of topics which previously had but little or never engaged the attention of the prairie people. For a designation, these discussions may be referred to as "Scientific Infidelity (hypotheses of recent science), Atheism and Ingersollism," all of which by August became merged into another topic, viz: "The Hamline versus the State university." It will take some space to narrate how these discussions arose, how they were kept going at intervals and how at last matters were in a measure righted. These things were as much a part of the local history of the prairie for the year 1879 as were the ball games, etc., for 1875.

In the first place the nation at large was entering upon an intellectual transitional stage, concerning which the next generation could see that old beliefs were then in process of disintegration. At such times reflex influences penetrate country communities through the medium of printed matter, nevertheless agricultural communities are apt to cling to certain views long after their abandonment in educational centers. There are apt to be individuals in these communities, less obtuse, but who have often been constrained to silence owing to their knowledge that the majority about them hold other opinions or have not been appreciatively educated.



We did not hear the discussions themselves, but heard of them instead, so we cannot say as to how far the different questions were mistakenly confounded together as one and the same thing. Even between atheism and Ingersollism an educated person would draw a line of distinction; the first needs no definition; the other was what is now called agnosticism. Among the class of clergymen referred to, infidelity in science, in contradistinction to "true science," was merely any conclusion or hypothesis of scientific men that in general did not accord with a literal interpretation of the first ten chapters of Genesis. Of course the majority of Methodist clergymen and church people admitted the geological antiquity of the earth, this having then been taught in the higher institutions of learning for over forty years.

During the preceding fall and winter the writer contributed to a Caledonia paper some articles on geological science, prehistoric man, etc., though nothing was written on the evolutionary doctrine. Rev. Miles derided geology in the pulpit as a false science and further talked that way in some of the houses. Some of the church people admitted that they did not co-incide with him in his attitude respecting physical science; geology, they knew, was a firmly established science. There was nothing in the articles mentioned, as we recall them, but what is now taught in school books or admitted in Biblical encyclopædias.\*

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\* Hastings' Biblical Dictionary, a standard work, art. "Deluge," makes this concession: "That the writers and compilers of Genesis sincerely believed the story we need have no doubt, but in the light of scientific and historical criticism it must be frankly recognized as one of those many stories or legends which are found in the folk-lore and early literature of all peoples."

But more than any influence the aforesaid articles could have exercised, was Rev. Miles frequent attacks upon a noted skeptic and lecturer, who, about that time, was attaining national reputation, and of no favorable kind. The clergy who so freely attacked Ingersollism all over the country, failed to see that they were stimulating public curiosity in regard to the views and published writings of the man and advertising the same to all the young people within hearing. And it was the same with the scientific doctrine of Evolution, which Rev. Miles denounced in almost every sermon. Some of the young people of the community began to express a desire to read works on popularized science.

Next came the "university question." At that time the Methodist denomination were building a university between St. Paul and Minneapolis, and raising funds to carry on the work. The two oldest sons of J. Shumway had of late been attending the state university, a fact that stood to their credit, but were now at home for the summer vacation. On his way home, H. P. Shumway had gone with a fellow student to stop with him a few days in Chatfield; while there a certain Dr. Stafford came and delivered a lecture for the benefit of Hamline university. Arriving home, H. P. Shumway reported that the lecturer mentioned had grossly misrepresented conditions at the state university, and that in his opinion the said lecturer was not a fit person to be entrusted with any such mission. It was expected that a lecturer would come to Caledonia, and perhaps Portland Prairie also, hence a local interest began to be manifested.

Rev. Miles drove down from Caledonia and preached in the church each alternate Sunday. On intervening

Sundays that summer Dr. Ambler was in the habit of driving up from New Albin and supplying the pulpit. Neither of these preachers publicly attacked the state university from the pulpit, but in private conversation in houses they characterized the institution as a "hotbed of infidelity." For some time John Albee had taken to the practise of medicine, and was spoken of as "Dr. John." He had opportunities to talk with both parties, also frequently with H. P. Shumway, who knew more about the state university from personal observation than the two preachers did. In his calls at houses Dr. Albee was inclined to defend the state university and helped to intensify local interest. Unprejudiced persons began to think that a spirit of rivalry was being developed and that a certain class of Methodist ministers were interested in creating a prejudice against the state institution so as to deter church people of their denomination from sending their sons there.

One Sunday in August, Rev. H. C. Jennings drove down from Caledonia in company with Rev. Miles. He was to lecture in the church for the benefit of Hamline university and as the people had received previous notice that he was to come that day, a larger congregation than usual filled the church, all curious to know how a trite subject would be handled. But Mr. Jennings was well known to the people and there was a general expectation that the topic would be judiciously dealt with. The meeting was the same as the usual church service, the lecture corresponding with the sermon. Mr. Jennings spoke of the necessity of an education, religious as well as secular. Speaking of the non-religious character of state institutions, he said, "This is just as it

ought to be. The state has no right to teach any form of religion in its schools." And he gave reasons. The Christian body had become so divided into sects, all differing in forms of worship and doctrine, that no public educational institution could be placed in charge of any one of them without exciting the jealousy and dissatisfaction of the others. To avoid endless contention and controversy there was no resource other than to keep religion out of the public schools. Yet any denomination that could maintain them, had a right to build colleges, if they chose. Although Mr. Jennings ranged rather widely over educational topics, no word of denunciation of the state university came from him. In regard to the late discussions in the community, he said that he would have no controversy with any one over such topics. On the whole, Mr. Jennings treated his subject with a broad-minded liberality, calculated to satisfy all present. Although the times were getting hard locally, a considerable sum of money was raised at the prairie for the benefit of Hamline university.

Late in the fall Rev. Miles, having been only one year at Caledonia, was succeeded by Rev. A. P. Bunce, a young man, who remained three years on the circuit. He was born in Columbia County, Wis., in 1855 and evidently had attended some theological college. He represented a transition type from an old school of the Methodist preacher to one that is decidedly new. Those topics that his predecessor denounced, he either let alone or voiced opposite views. Thus, he said in the pulpit: "Somehow or other we believe in these things; we believe that there has been a deluge; we believe in prehistoric man. There are many sound theologians at the

present day who believe that Adam was the first man; but from what I have been able to gather on that subject I have about reached the conclusion that he was not." Rev. Miles doubtless would have deemed this partial acceptance of the theory of pre-Adamite races peculiar, if not absolutely heretical. Such in general, is a brief history of an intellectual phase of life that caused much discussion on Portland Prairie during part of the year 1879. Questions of that nature occasionally penetrate country communities from outside sources.

During the "university" discussion a matter of more importance was engaging at times the thoughtful attention of the farmers. In 1878 there was scorching hot weather sometime before harvest that injured the wheat so that there was hardly more than half a crop. In 1879 the farmers said that the wheat crop of that year was "little better than chicken-feed." It now became apparent that a climatic change had ensued in that part of the country, and that one of two things would have to be done, either go more into stock-raising, with an improvement of breeds, or emigrate to Dakota, then attracting attention as a new wheat-raising country.

During the same summer and fall a narrow-gauge railroad was built from a junction on the river line at the mouth of Crooked creek, through Caledonia, Spring Grove and other places, to Preston, having a length of 59 miles. Twelve miles of road-bed for a three feet track was graded in Crooked Creek valley by Caledonia enterprise in 1874, but nothing more was done with the project for about five years. Then the C. D. & M. company took hold of the line and extended it to Preston. The track-laying, with light rails, began in the latter

part of August and as the line was extended up the valley, two construction trains were used to bring forward from the junction loads of rails, ties and bridge timbers.\* Locomotives and cars were proportionally

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\* When the track was being laid up the ravine just below Caledonia, a tie train came up behind the rail train and a gang of workmen hurriedly tumbled the ties out of the cars. Some twenty men of Caledonia and surrounding country, who had been watching the track-laying and spiking gangs, had permission to ride down to the junction on the tops of the cars. This was the afternoon of Sept. 24. The last two miles of track, that first laid, was ballasted and even, and curved around amid some small hills. Over this the returning train was run at a rapid rate. At the junction another loaded train was ready and after a short stay there the locomotive coupled to it and the return trip was made, the engine pushing the cars ahead of it.

The next day, a fine one, while the track was being laid through the village, much the same party of men made another trip to the junction on one of the construction trains. The locomotives were coal-burners, but coal not being obtainable at the junction just then, cord-wood was used for fuel, the furnaces being long enough to take in the wood without sawing. On the return trip that afternoon, the train was made up of box cars and platform cars, the latter loaded with bridge timbers to be sent by team miles ahead of the track-layers. When about two miles above Freeburg it was seen that the train was slowing down and at last it came to a stand still opposite a place near the creek where there was a large amount of dry driftwood. The crowd helped collect enough to refill the tender, the long stuff being chopped up with an axe. The furnace was at once stuffed full and about half an hour was spent there in raising steam. Then a run was made up the valley to a point a half mile below the mouth of the Caledonia ravine. Here another stop was made, as assistance was needed to pull and push the long train up the grade in the ravine, and signals were sounded for the engine of the rail train at Caledonia to come down. In about half an hour it came and coupled on to the forward end of the train. With this pulling and the other pushing, the train mounted over half way up the grade; then a stop was made to get up more steam for the final effort. This time the train halted in the village in the edge of evening, a crowd, mainly school children, lining the north side of the track near the town line to see it pass, the engines puffing heavily. The end of the track was then a little beyond the depot, this building being nearly finished at that time,



smaller than the standard, as the track was less wide. The ties were carried in box cars and unloaded back some distance behind the forward construction train which closely followed the track-laying gang to keep them supplied with rails unloaded from platform cars. The ties were carried forward beyond the track-layers with horse teams, another gang of laborers laying them on the road-bed. Each succeeding train load of ties was thrown off the cars a considerable distance beyond where the last had been unloaded. The rails were taken forward on a light truck-car pulled by a horse, but only short distances, since the rail train kept moving after the track-layers at intervals. The track reached Caledonia September 25; Spring Grove, October 13, and Preston sometime in December.

In a week or more after the track reached Caledonia, a passenger coach, stock-cars, etc., were brought on the road and it was opened to ordinary traffic to that point, presumably partially in conjunction with the running of construction trains further along the line. This line opened a nearer railroad market for Portland Prairie than that at New Albin. In October a large number of hogs raised at the prairie, were marketed at Caledonia. At Caledonia Junction (Reno) the stock had to be transferred to standard-gauge cars, and in fact, all kinds of freight had to be reloaded there. In the fall of 1901 the track was altered to the standard-gauge.

With the end of the old phase of life on the prairie there was some outgoing of some of the farmers. The Kelly family left for Nebraska about 1878; Christian Flessa later moved to Kansas, and John Sinclair left for Nebraska. In the spring of 1880 E. C. Arnold and son

H. F. Arnold, accompanied by H. V. Arnold and Fred A. Wright, left for Grand Forks County, in North Dakota, the entire journey being made with ox teams. About the same time James Emerson and family emigrated to South Dakota, C. F. Wright buying his place. In the earlier part of the eighties following, Houston County lost heavily in population. Containing an area of only 568 square miles, largely ridge, valley and ravine lands, it had a population of 16,566 in 1875, decreased to 14,653 souls in 1890.

The first few years after the cessation of the raising of spring wheat was a transition stage which gradually opened up more prosperous conditions than the older times had ever produced. First came creameries in that section of country, followed by an increase of the number of hogs and cattle raised, with attention to good breeds of the same, and a more careful looking after the land. Then came the big red barns, drilled wells and windmills on farms that did not have them before. In many instances more substantial houses were built and others more or less remodeled. In the middle nineties the telephone came into the community, and later the rural mail delivery, with the possibility of taking some city daily paper. As for organs, some families had begun to possess them in the seventies. At last children began growing up in the community to whom the hardships and privations their grandparents had experienced in the old days, were only family traditions. The old times of Portland Prairie ended with the wheat-raising days,

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## NOTES AND FAMILY RECORDS.

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Duck creek, p. 14, should read Archie creek. This is a small streamlet in a ravine south of the Robinson place. The Duck creek ravine is a mile farther west. The first opens into Waterloo creek valley just below, the other above Dorchester.

A matter in which the larger young people were interested was overlooked in its place. In the early summer of 1864 they got up an entertainment which was held in an unfinished church south of where Eitzen was afterwards built up. We think it was also held on another evening at the (old) McNelly school house. The first public school house Christmas-tree gathering that the writer remembers at Portland Prairie, was about 1866 or '67. On a few occasions some kind of entertainment was held in connection with these gatherings.

Page 39. The distant sound of a cannon heard in the direction of Decorah.—On reflection, we think this was rather celebrating the news of the surrender of Lee's army instead of the fall of Richmond. People realized that both events ended the war.

Frank Cook, p. 44, should read Daniel Cook.

The name of August Hannebuth should have been added to the soldiers' list on p. 47. He served in an Illinois regiment.

Page 63. On account of the sickness and expected death of Wesley Albee the prairie people probably gave up holding any picnic on July 4, 1868.

Page 67. In the middle sixties W. R. Ballou lived part of the time at Lansing and Village Creek.

## NOTES ON POINTS SUBSEQUENT TO 1880.

Other Removals.—In the spring of 1881 J. Shumway and family moved to Nebraska.—Frank Healy moved to South Dakota about that time.—August Guhl sold his place in 1882 and went to Nebraska.—Mrs. Anne Sneesby moved to South Dakota about 1883.—David Matcalf moved to Nebraska about 1891.—H. W. Pease sold out and went to South Dakota in 1893.—The same year Geo. Carver moved to Lansing and Samuel Evans sold out and moved to Nebraska about that time.

Geo. Cass rented his farm in 1889 to practise medicine, and some ten years later he moved to Caledonia.

Some young men of the prairie formed a brass band in 1890 and built a band-house of common lumber in the grove at the southeast corner of the G. M. Watson place.

The telephone was introduced into the community in 1896, the central being at the old Cass place. Some years later it was moved to R. E. Shumway's house. In 1902 another line was brought into the community. In the fall of 1910 the Northwestern Telephone Company carried a long distance line across Portland Prairie, following the main road.—The rural delivery of mail dates from the fall of 1901.

New barns were built in 1897 on the Con. Metcalf, Lapham, Weibke and Widow Robinson places. Barn built on the Alice Albee place in 1905; also one on the Alfred Albee place next south, in 1907. Most all the farms had drilled wells and wind-mills prior to 1900.

The present R. E. Shumway house was built in 1891; the one on the Bernard Schoh place about 1896; the G. M. Watson, once the A. Arnold place, rebuilt over and much enlarged in 1897; a new house on the Kohlmeier place in 1900, and one on the Theodore Thiele place in 1902. We have given above such data in regard to buildings as we chance to have in hand.

Another plat-book of Houston County was published in 1896. Again taking the same sections in Wilmington and Winnebago townships as hitherto given on pages 75-76 and 89-90, it will be seen that a number of changes in ownership of the land had ensued since 1878. Some remarks will be appended, mostly in relation to changes later than 1896.

SECTION 13, Wilmington.—South half only. East quarter, C. Bunge, 40 acres; Carl Busitzke, 50 acres; Ole A. Moen, 70 acres. West quarter, Isabelle Hartley, 60 acres; H. Schroedar, 100 acres. (The Searns Nelson place of 180 acres had gone into C. Bunge's possession; the E. C. Arnold place was now owned by C. Busitzke together with the Pease farm. The last two are now owned by W. F. Deters. The diminished Hartley place is now owned by Herbert Lapham who went on to it in 1897.)

SECTION 24.—Geo. M. Watson, 200 acres; C. Metcalf, 196 acres; C. F. Wright, 80 acres including roads; Fred Thiese, 80 acres; G. H. Meyer, 40 acres; C. Stigen, 40 acres. (G. M. Watson had bought the C. F. Albee forty in 1890, and not long before that had acquired by purchase the A. Arnold farm. After the death of the owner in 1899, the Con. Metcalf place became divided up. Lewis Haar who lives at the former Kelly place, has the ridge part; Herman Schoh the southwest part including farm buildings; and Wm. Bramme 70 acres on the east side, and has a house under the ridge. The Wright estate is occupied by Mrs. Wright, a second wife of the late C. F. Wright. Fred Thiese moved over to Eitzen about 1900 and a son Frank now has the place. The Stigen farm, in two sections, was once the Frank Healy place.)

SECTION 25.—C. F. Albee, 80 acres; Alfred Albee, 80 acres; Geo. H. Meyer, 40 acres; a forty next west, no record; Jacob Evenson, 42 acres; O. E. Olsgard, 41 acres; W. E. McNelly, 26 acres, Geo. W. Metcalf, 13 acres; L. Albee, 110 acres; Joseph Winkelman, 80 acres; John McNelly, 80 acres. (C. F. Albee

died in 1898 and Mrs. Albee in 1909, so that Miss Alice Albee now has the farm. The Alfred Albee place is the eighty once owned by J. Shumway and prior to 1870 was the south half of C. F. Albee's quarter-section. Geo. W. Metcalf had W. R. Ballou build him a house several rods west of the Leonard Albee house in 1881 and got land to go with it, but in December, 1901, he moved to a farm one mile west of Caledonia. The small tract and L. Albee place is now owned by Fred Deters.)

SECTION 36.—H. F. Kohlmeier, 40 acres; Katherine Schultze 120 acres; Jurgen Meyers, 80 acres; Katherine Schultze, 40 acres; Henry Mowinkel, 40 acres; Geo. Meyers, 40 acres; Elisha Cook, 40 acres; Geo. Robinson estate, 80 acres; Henry Robinson, 60 acres; Jurgen Guhl, 60 acres; Geo. Deters, 36 acres. (Geo. Robinson was killed on the evening of November 14, 1891 by the upsetting of a load of lumber to the east of Eitzen, while returning from New Albin on the ridge road. He left two twin boys, born February 21, 1876. Geo. H. Meyers now owns the place. Henry Robinson is still on his place which he has occupied for fifty years. The Elisha Cook forty is owned by a son, Wm. Cook.)

SECTION 18, Winnebago.—South half only. East quarter Martin P. Twite (now owned by Mrs. Halter); west quarter, about 162 acres, Martin & Carl Hanson.

SECTION 19.—J. H. Schoh, 40 acres; Chris. Kruger, 120 acres; L. L. Lapham, 181 acres; Carl Busitzke (now W. F. Deters) 81 acres; J. H. Schoh (now Carl Schoh) 160 acres; Henry Weibke, 61 acres.

SECTION 30.—Diedrick Thiele, <sup>160</sup>~~190~~ acres; Henry Weibke, 40 acres; C. F. Albee, 40 acres; Geo. Cass (now Fred Deters) 74 acres; F. Deters, 159 acres; E. D. Carsten, 40 acres; Mrs. C. F. Wright, 20 acres (part of the former Metcalf farm;) R. E. Shumway.

SECTION 31.—E. D. Carsten, 40 acres; Frank Deters, 40 acres; Fred Deters, 120 acres; H. F. Kohlmeier, 80 acres; Gerhardt Deters, 160 acres; Lambert Linde, 120 acres; Henry Schapper, 80 acres. (Kohlmeier's place is now owned by Otto Fruchte.)



Over along the west road several good houses and barns have replaced the inferior ones of earlier times. The Arnold Stone quarter-section was so far divided up and partly attached to adjoining places, that four different persons own the land now.

Going down the west road, places come in the following order: Chris. Stigen, Geo. H. Meyer, Gustav Moitrodt, Bernard Schoh, Theodore Thiele, Wm. E. McNelly and August Weigrafe.

W. E. McNelly bought the Hannebuth place in 1883 and went on his present place in 1892.

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The publisher has received a letter from Mrs. J. B. Williams of Woonsocket, R. I., in answer to an inquiry concerning dates in regard to the family of Dr. Alex. Batcheller, to be included in such family records as we have been able to obtain. Mrs. Williams writes interestingly of her early recollections at Portland Prairie:—

“I can give you some dates with a few incidents that I can call to mind. We landed at Lansing October 17, 1854 and our family went from there to Portland Prairie the same day. I do not remember all of the families that had left for the west a head of us, but think Charles Albee, Jerry Shumway and Duty and James Paine did so. We went to Charles Albee’s for a few days and then we got board with Asa Sherman. His sister and her husband, David Salisbury, were keeping the house. There we stayed until father could build the ell part that now stands on the John McNelly house. The Indians (Winnebagoes) often came to the house bringing venison and wild game. Herds of deer would stop at our gate, and at night the wolves would howl and bark, so mother wanted board blinds on the house, for she was afraid that they would break in.

“I think that John G. Cook and Elisha Cook came in the spring of 1855. My mother hired John’s daughter, Mary Ann, to teach the children of our family in the house, but I do not remember whether any other children came or not. I think that it was on the following Fourth of July that the families around Portland

Prairie held a picnic. My father was county commissioner and often went to Caledonia where business was done in those days. We kept the postoffice in our house, father being postmaster. I presume Mary Ann Cook kept the first school in the little school house just east of our place, called the Batcheller school house. When we moved to Iowa, father sold to John McNelly."

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We now proceed to give some family records of both present and former residents of Portland Prairie. Some were not in hand at the time that the first half of this book was printed. We do not propose to include data concerning children of sons and daughters of the early settlers where these, after marriage, have since resided outside the county or state. Of course the number of families here listed might have been somewhat extended over and above those concerning whom some records have been obtained. The main object, however, has been to present the family records of births, deaths and marriages of those identified with Portland Prairie at any time prior to 1880, especially the old families.

#### ROBINSON FAMILY.

James Robinson, born in Ireland 1797; died 1841.

Mrs. Rose Robinson, born in Ireland 1804; died Oct. 19, 1890.

#### Children:

William, born April 1, 1829; died November 20, 1872.

Henry, born March 15, 1831.

Anne, born May 1, 1835.

George, born . . . . ., 1837; died November 14, 1891.

Esther, born January 1, 1839; died September 14, 1901.

John T., born February 2, 1842.

Minnie Robinson, daughter of William, was born March 7, 1866; married George H. Lapham November 27, 1882.

## EVERETT FAMILY.

Josiah Everett, born May 23, 1797; died October 20, 1875.

Lucy Everett, born February 2, 1801; died November 9, 1896.

## Children:

Orra, born January 29, 1823; died . . . . ., 1902.

Josiah 2d, died in infancy.

Josiah 3d, born March 25, 1827; died about 27 years ago.

Andrew, born March 18, 1829.

Franklin, born December 12, 1831.

Lucy, born May 22, 1836.

Benaiah, born August 22, 1839.

Seth, born June 3, 1842; died October 31, 1868.

The Everetts left Portland Prairie for Nebraska, March 10, 1868. Franklin Everett had several children, all but one born when he lived on the Iowa side of the state line, to-wit: Fremont, born December 16, 1855; Walter, born April 12, 1858; E . . . B., born January 13, 1865; Clara Ethel, born November 4, 1870. Fremont Everett was married by Rev. W. M. Bowdish in the church at Portland Prairie on the evening of July 3, 1877 to Miss Mary Evelyn Shumway, and the couple were of the party that next day went to the Fourth of July gathering on the Iowa river, (pp. 86-7).—Mrs. Franklin Everett, b. June 10, 1834; d. Aug. 10, 1911.

## FAMILY OF CHARLES F. ALBEE.

Charles F. Albee, born February 1, 1822; died Dec. 26, 1898.

Mrs. Sarah (Paine) Albee, born August 8, 1825; d. Aug. 21, 1909.

Married, April 22, 1847.

## Children:

Edgar, born October 24, 1848; died June 4, 1866.

Emily, born December 26, 1853.

Alice, born December 13, 1857.

Maria, born December 20, 1859.

Alfred, born July 22, 1862.

Olive, born April 29, 1864.

## FAMILY OF JEREMIAH SHUMWAY.

Jeremiah Shumway, born in Oxford Mass., October 15, 1827.

Mary (Paine) Shumway, born July 28, 1832; died Aug. 19, 1898.

Married July 24, 1852.

## Children:

Viola P., born June 28, 1853.

Herbert P., born April 18, 1856.

Mary Evelyn, born September 10, 1858.

Edgar E., born January 27, 1862.

Charles O., born January 25, 1864.

George Loren, born October 17, 1868.

Joseph Arthur, born December 8, 1870; died Feb. 28, 1873.

Martin LeRoy, born December 25, 1874.

## FAMILY OF DR. ALEX. BATCHELLER.

Dr. Alex. Batcheller, born December 2, 1811; d. Sept. 29, 1878.

Mrs. Kezia (Wallin) Batcheller, b. Feb. 6, 1815; d. Dec. 9, 1898.

## Children:

Francis L., born April 1, 1836; died February 23, 1900.

Victoria E., born March 8, 1842; died December 29, 1866.

Alexander F., born May 4, 1847; died January 28, 1911.

Lucy D., born October 18, 1848.

Martha W., born May 23, 1850.

Moses F., born January 3, 1853.

Stephen E., born May 29, 1858.

All of the members of the Batcheller family married except Francis. Alexander F. married first, Adelaide Marcy; after her death he married second, Mary Ballou, all having been at one time Portland Prairie residents. Lucy D., married John B. Williams of Woonsocket, R. I., September 27, 1899.

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DR. GEORGE J. CASS, born September 12, 1847. Married Ellen L. Healy January 8, 1870. She was born February 28, 1845. Children, all born at Portland Prairie, Lewis Elwin, Ellen Mabel and Harriet H.

## FAMILY OF JOHN McNELLY.

John McNelly, born March 25, 1830.

Married first, Nancy Shumway, February 15, 1852; born Dec. 1, 1839; died September 9, 1868. Married second, Alida Henderson November 11, 1869; born in Wyoming Co., N. Y.; September 14, 1848; died August 11, 1891. Married third; Charlotte Cass October 25, 1893; died February 14, 1894.

Children by first wife:

Ella E., born October 25, 1852.

Oscar, born June 7, 1854; died August 7, 1863.

William E., born December 20, 1857.

Mary P., born September 11, 1859; died September 16, 1859.

Elizabeth M., born November 30, 1860; died August 23, 1863.

Annie M., born September 9, 1862.

Nancy Etta, born June 22, 1868.

Children by second wife:

John H., born September 9, 1876.

Eugenia A., born June 6, 1879.

Mabel E., born January 1, 1885.

Robert, born January 26, 1891.

## FAMILY OF RUFUS E. SHUMWAY.

Rufus E. Shumway, born in Oxford, Mass., June 1, 1833.

Hannah (Metcalf) Shumway, b. Mendon Mass., April 25, 1834.

Married March 4, 1860.

Children:

Adelia F., born December 18, 1860; died October 21, 1870.

Frederick L., born August 10, 1862.

William C., born June 16, 1869; died July 31, 1875.

Edwin R., born October 13, 1871.

Bertha E., born October 5, 1873.

On June 7, 1910, Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Shumway observed their golden wedding. Many relatives and friends from Nebraska and even more distant locations were present at this pleasureable gathering, and photographs of the assemblage were taken.

## FAMILY OF WILLIAM CASS.

William Cass, born March 2, 1809; died December 8, 1883.

Mrs. Sarah W. (Sturdy) Cass, b. May 4, 1819; d. March 6, 1899.

Married March 27, 1839.

## Children:

Charlotte, born May 27, 1842; died February 14, 1894.

George J., born September 12, 1847.

Adelaide, born . . . . ., 18 . .

William, born September 15, 1853.

Charlotte became the third wife of John McNelly; George J., (p. 108); Adelaide married Henry Eddy about 1869; and William Jr. married Viola P. Shumway in the fall of 1875.

## FAMILY OF LEVI L. LAPHAM.

Levi L. Lapham, born in Burrillville, R. I., April 11, 1829. *A Jan 2 1916*

Mrs. Sarah (Cargill) Lapham, b. May 28, 1834; d. April 24, 1911.

Married January 13, 1857.

## Children:

Fanny, born January 8, 1861.

Cora, born April 20, 1863.

George H., born April 13, 1866.

Herbert L., born August 13, 1869.

## FAMILY OF CHARLES F. WRIGHT.

Charles F. Wright, born October 7, 1831; died Jan. 6, 1907.

Married first, October 7, 1856, Mary Metcalf, born June 13, 1832; died November 15, 1891. Married second, in 1892,

Mrs. Alice (Bushee) Griswold. Children all by first wife.

## Children:

Samantha, born June 14, 1857; died February 9, 1890.

Frederick A., born March 2, 1862.

Charles, born February 24, 1864.

Arthur L., born February 25, 1874.



## FAMILY OF ARNOLD STONE.

Arnold Stone, born May 25, 1821; died June 6, 1900.

Philinda (Aldrich) Stone, born May 23, 1824; died Oct. 6, 1885.

Married November 13, 1844.

## Children:

Marcus M., born August 28, 1846.

Ellen F., born April 6, 1848; died February 25, 1904.

Jane M., born July 6, 1849.

Phebe E., born August 17, 1853.

John G., born February 21, 1857.

Emeline A., born July 10, 1859.

Adelaide E., born March 29, 1862.

Louis N., born April 30, 1865; died July 27, 1869.

Cora E., born July 22, 1871; died March 22, 1872.

## FAMILY OF FREDERICK THEISE.

Frederick Theise, born in Hanover, Germany, June 19, 1836.

Mrs. Christina (Ritmuller) Theise, born May 12, 1838.

## Children:

Louisa, born May 11, 1859.

Mary, born October 27, 1860.

Sophia, born July 27, 1862.

Henry, born February 12, 1864.

Christina, born May 31, 1866.

Frank, born May 14, 1868.

Emily, born April 22, 1870.

Herman, born May 12, 1872.

Caroline, born August 22, 1874.

Anna, born August 31, 1876.

Otto, born November 16, 1879.

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GEORGE T. SHUMWAY, born October 30, 1840; died about 1898. Married April 3, 1870 Florence E. Henderson, born January 27, 1851. Moved to Swift Co., Minn., 1875. Children: Harold, Arthur, Agnes, George, Frank and Merlin.

## FAMILY OF WM. WALKER EVERETT.

William Walker Everett, b. March 23, 1830; k. Dec. 16, 1864.

Was twice married; married second February 28, 1855 Maria Carleton, born January 20, 1839.

Children by first wife:

William, born May 13, 1849.

Thomas, born March 23, 1851.

Children by second wife:

Irene, born December 31, 1855.

Walker, born February 8, 1857.

George, born September 8, 1859.

Eliza, born April 5, 1860.

David, born May 1, 1862.

Mrs. Maria Everett married second, January 14, 1875 Joseph Winkelman, born in Germany February 13, 1838. Mrs. Winkelman died July 30, 1894. Her mother, Mrs. Carleton, who passed the last years of her life in this home, died about March, 1902. —Eliza Everett married Albert Hartley sometime in the later seventies. The other children scattered to other locations.

## FAMILY OF CORNELIUS METCALF JR.

Cornelius Metcalf Jr. born Sept. 30, 1837; died Jan. 28, 1899.

Elizabeth (Albee) Metcalf, b. . . . . 18 . . ; d. Oct. 13, 1903.

Married March 29, 1860.

Children:

George W., born April 5, 1861.

Lucinda, born March 29, 1864; died March 26, 1882.

Eveline E., born February 20, 1868.

Mary N., born January 18, 1873; died September 13, 1901.

Charles W., born January 4, 1877.

DAVID G. METCALF, born March 10, 1847; married Florence Yeaton in 1869; she was born April 4, 1851; died May 14, 1877. Children: Melvin, b. May 28, 1871; Lowell, b. Feb. 24, 1874. —Later, D. G. Metcalf married a sister of Mrs. J. S. Yeaton.

## FAMILY OF HENRY WIEBKE.

Henry Wiebke, born in Germany February 20, 1848.

Married twice; first marriage on November 3, 1871; first wife died May 1, 1885. Married second on November 29, 1887.

Children by first wife:

Melinda, born September 21, 1872.

Henry, born October 18, 1873.

William, born March 20, 1876.

George, born August 31, 1882.

Lydia, born October 13, 1884.

Children by second wife:

Alma, born September 11, 1888.

Addie, born March 22, 1891.

Elsie, born June 27, 1893.

Leroy, born February 29, 1896.

Herbert, born December 6, 1899.

Fremont, born July 23, 1901.

## FAMILY OF ELLERY C. ARNOLD.

Ellery C. Arnold, born in Cumberland, R. I., July 4, 1828.

Married March 30, 1856 Mrs. Adeline Bowen (nee Steere), born January 1, 1828.

Children:

Horace F., born June 19, 1857.

Adeline L., born June 22, 1860.

Emma C., born August 14, 1864.

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JAMES M. PAINE, Children of, born at Portland Prairie. By first wife, Ruth E. A. (Shumway) Paine:—Martha, born May 27, 1855; James S., born July 20, 1857; Rufus M., born April 10, 1859; Amy H., born June 11, 1861. By second wife, Nancy (Thorp) Paine, born March 6, 1846:—Minerva J. born March 6, 1865.—Eight children were born after moving to Iowa, who were named Edgar A., Sarah A., Charles J., Mary B., Cora P., Walter H., Jessie M., and Lula M.

## WATSON FAMILY.

George M. Watson, born in Maine April 25, 1839.

Lucy (Arnold) Watson, born in Burrillville, R. I., June 6, 1846.

Married December 25, 1866.

One son, George L. Watson, born October 7, 1879.

George L. Watson married October 16, 1902, Matilda Johnson  
of Blooming Prairie, Minn., born August 2, 1879.

Children:

Gertrude A., born May 10, 1903.

Arthur L., born November 30, 1906.

## FAMILY OF PLINY GRAVES.

Pliny Graves, born in Wisconsin, April 26, 1850.

Mrs. Ella (McNelly) Graves, b. Burrillville, R. I., Oct. 25, 1852.

Married July 1, 1873.

Children:

Chauncey M., born February 7, 1875.

Walter B., born January 23, 1877.

John F., born January 7, 1880.

Oscar T., born April 3, 1884; died March 14, 1899.

Pliny C., born November 4, 1886.

Carlyle R., born September 16, 1889.

Elwood E., born August 13, 1895.

Norman E., born September 9, 1897.

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FREDERICK MOITRODT, Children of

William, born May 26, 1863.

Annie, born June 25, 1864.

Gustav and Otto (twins), born November 10, 1868.

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LEONARD ALBEE, born November 4, 1810; d. March 9, 1893.

Eliza (Buckman) Albee, born August 8, 1812; d. June 11, 1901.

Married in 1833.—Two children died in infancy.—Elizabeth,  
born April 3, 1841; died October 13, 1903. J. Wesley, born  
. . . . . 1842; died July 5, 1868.

## FAMILY OF GEORGE W. METCALF.

George W. Metcalf, born at Portland Prairie, April 5, 1861.

Mrs. Ida (Purdy) Metcalf, born in Hawley, Pa., July 28, 1860.

Married July 3, 1878.

## Children:

Florence E., born May 6, 1879; died March 23, 1898.

Nellie Ida, born August 20, 1880.

George W., born August 14, 1882.

Eva May, born September 14, 1884.

Sadie L., born May 22, 1888.

Frances, born September 8, 1891.

Hiram T., born January 4, 1894.

Cornelius G., born April 13, 1896.

Blanche H., born September 17, 1897.

Effie E., born December 31, 1899; died February 23, 1900.

Leslie W., born September 4, 1901.

Arthur L., born February 10, 1904.

EVELINE E. (METCALF) CHESLER, born February 20, 1868.

Married on November 12, 1890 William Chesler.

## Children:

Myrtle, born September 23, 1891.

Grace, born June 20, 1893.

Archie, born May 6, 1895.

Lila, born April 26, 1897.

Kenneth, born June 10, 1902.

Lavina, born August 26, 1905.

MARY N. (METCALF) LAGER, born January 18, 1873; died

September 13, 1901. Married April, 13, 1893 Louis Lager.

Children: Clarence, born August 15, 1894; Pearl, born October 28, 1895.

CORA (LAPHAM) PALMER born April 20, 1863. Married August 28, 1890 L. O. Palmer, of Calenonia, Minn.

Children: Lora B., Francis I., Grace H., Marjorie M., Leland L.

Herbert Lincoln b. July 14 - 1891 - d. Jan 29, 1892

Ruth Deborah Palmer b. Jan 29, 1893 married

Marion Grabball Byers of La Crosse Wis.

Lora B. Palmer b. April 27, 1895

Grace Helen Palmer Oct. 2, 1899  
Mary Marjorie " Feb. 28, 1902  
Leland L. P.

## FAMILY OF WILLIAM E. MCNELLY.

William E. McNelly, born at Portland Prairie, Dec, 20, 1857.

Married first on October 19, 1879 Samantha Wright, born June 14, 1857; died February 9, 1890. Married second June 3, 1891 Miss . . . . Ratcliffe of Mt. Hope, born July 21, 1867.

## Children by first wife:

William O., born June 4, 1881.

Chester LeRoy, born June 12, 1883.

Mary Etta, born September 21, 1885.

Charles E., born July 31, 1888.

## Children by second wife:

Frank, born April 5, 1892.

Irving, born October 11, 1903.

## FAMILY OF ALFRED ALBEE.

Alfred Albee, born at Portland Prairie July 22, 1862.

Mrs. Charlotte G. (Ratcliffe) Albee, born October 23, 1864.

Married on September 25, 1889.

## Children:

Charles Benjamin, born January 28, 1891.

Born and died a son November 6, 1892.

Alfred Leonard, born August 27, 1894.

Edgar Jay, born September 22, 1898.

Ralph Halstead, born November 29, 1900.

Mabel Carlotta, born May 24, 1903.

Donald Ratcliffe, born November 4, 1906.

## FAMILY OF FRANK THEISE.

Frank Theise, born at Portland Prairie May 14, 1868.

Married Louisa Freuchte, born July 25, 1873.

## Children:

Lorah, born August 30, 1897.

Martha, born April 30, 1900.

Roy, born March 25, 1903.

Ella, born August 23, 1906.



## FAMILY OF HERBERT L. LAPHAM.

Herbert L. Lapham, born at Portland Prairie August 13, 1869.

Mrs. Flora J. (Taylor) Lapham, b. at Popes Prairie July 10, 1870.

Married October 6, 1892.

## Children:

Florence J., born October 30, 1893; died June 16, 1894.

Lola L., born August 1, 1895.

Grant L., born February 5, 1898.

Gladys H., born April 7, 1903.

Bernice, born June 12, 1905.

Eloise, born October 4, 1907.

## FAMILY OF OTTO FREUCHTE.

Otto Freuchte, born at Portland Prairie May 24, 1868.

Emily (Theise) Freuchte, born at Portland Prairie, April 22, 1870.

Married February 18, 1892.

## Children:

Francis, born December 13, 1893.

Herbert, born June 22, 1897.

Edwin, born November 5, 1900.

Lula, born July 20, 1902.

Raymond, born January 3, 1911.

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## LAST NOTES.

There were some marriages and deaths relative to former Portland Prairie residents concerning whom no full dates were obtained. Martha Paine married Myron Butterfield late in the fall of 1877, and in the spring of 1879 the couple moved to Barnes County, N. D.—Amy H. Paine married Melvin Yeaton sometime in the early eighties.—Emily Albee married Zelotes M. Yeaton sometime in the middle seventies.

Amos Lapham died at Caledonia early in 1891; William Hartley about 1892. Joel S. Yeaton lived about thirty-one years after moving to Nebraska (p. 70) for he died in the fall of 1900. Christian Bunge of Eitzen died in 1902. William R. Ballou was born in 1816 and died at New Albin, February, 1906. Henry F. Kohlmeier, another former resident, died in 1910.

After moving to North Dakota in the spring of 1880, the writer paid visits to Portland Prairie at different times, as follows: in November, 1882; in November, 1884; in the fall of 1887; in November and December, 1891; in April, 1895; in December, 1901, and lastly, during December, 1910. On the occasion of the visit in 1891 we arrived at New Albin about 1 o'clock p. m., Saturday, November 14, and proceeded to the prairie on foot by way of the Winnebago Valley and Tippery ravine. Geo. Robinson was in New Albin that afternoon, but never reached home alive. Next morning Mrs. C. F. Wright died. These two deaths coming so close together caused quite a flurry in the community.

## PORTLAND PRAIRIE NECROLOGY.

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- Noah Shumway, born October 4, 1770, died June 20, 1857.  
Parmelia A. Shumway, born July 15, 1800; died Oct. 8, 1857.  
John Cook, died May 25, 1861, aged 94 years.  
Mrs. Josephine A. Sherman, died July 2, 1862.  
Oscar McNelly, born June 7, 1854; died August 7, 1863.  
Mrs. Ruth E. A. Paine, born August 4, 1835; d. Sept. 20, 1863.  
Jarvis S. Eddy, died December 10, 1863, aged 17 years 4 mos.  
Mrs. Rachel Coil, wife of Wm. Coil, died Aug. 7, 1865, aged 64.  
Edgar Albee, born October 24, 1848; died June 4, 1866.  
Mrs. Barbara Marcy, died November 11, 1867, aged 63 years.  
William H. Stone, died January 31, 1868.  
Wesley Albee, died July 5, 1868, aged about 26 years.  
Mrs. Nancy McNelly, born December 1, 1829; d. Sept. 4, 1868.  
Margaret Coil, wife of Nelson Coil, died May 8, 1869, aged 52.  
Adelia F. Shumway, born December 18, 1860; d. Oct. 21, 1870.  
William Robinson, born April 1, 1829; died November 20, 1872.  
William C. Shumway, born June 16, 1869; died July 31, 1875.  
Mrs. Florence Metcalf, born April 4, 1851, died May 14, 1877.  
Lucinda Metcalf, born March 29, 1864; died March 26, 1882.  
William Cass, born March 2, 1809; died December 8, 1883.  
Mrs. Betsey E. Graves, born May 14, 1812; d. February 7, 1884.  
Mrs. Lucy Arnold, born October 5, 1808, died July 6, 1886.  
Mrs. Philinda Stone, born May 23, 1824; died October 6, 1886.  
Mrs. Maria Cook, died November 12, 1885, aged 62 yrs. 5 mos.  
Freeman Graves, born July 10, 1809; died April 3, 1888.  
Cornelins Metcalf, born December 10, 1806; d. August 12, 1888.  
Mrs. Samantha L. McNelly born June 14, 1857; d. Feb. 9, 1890.  
Mrs. Alida McNelly (2d wife) b. Sept. 14, 1848, d. Aug. 11, '91.  
George Robinson, born 1837; died November 14, 1891.  
Mrs. Mary Wright, born June 13, 1832; died November 15, 1891.  
Leonard Albee, born November 4, 1810; died March 9, 1893.  
Mrs. Charlotte McNelly, (3d wife) b. May 27 1842; d. Feb. 14, '94.

Mrs. Maria C. Winkelman, born Jan. 20, 1839; d. July 30, 1894.

Amos Arnold, born August 13, 1807; died April 6, 1895.

Willie A. Hartley, born January 1, 1882, died Sept. 6, 1895.

Maria E. Cook, died October 28, 1895, aged 34 years 9 months.

Mrs. Isabelle Hartley, born January 8, 1833; died Feb. 7, 1896.

George W. Carver, born January 24, 1814; died Feb. 20, 1897.

Mrs. Mary Shumway, died at Lyons, Neb., Aug. 16, 1898, 66.

Charles F. Albee, born February 1, 1822; died Dec. 26, 1898.

Cornelius Metcalf, born September 30, 1837; d. Jan. 28, 1899.

William Jones, born March 11, 1817; died February 10, 1899.

Mrs. Sarah W. Cass, born May 4, 1819; died March 6, 1899.

Oscar T. Graves, born April 3, 1884; died March 14, 1899.

Arnold Stone, born May 25, 1821; died June 6, 1900.

Dr. John Albee, born February 14, 1827; died October 3, 1900.

Mrs. Eliza Albee, born August 8, 1812; died June 11, 1901.

Mrs. Mary N. Lager, born January 18, 1873; d. Sept. 13, 1901.

Mrs. Elizabeth Metcalf, born April 3, 1841; died Oct. 13, 1903.

Elisha Cook, born 1815; died 1904.

Horace Arnold, born April 8, 1833; died August 21, 1904.

Charles F. Wright, born October 7, 1831; died January 6, 1907.

Mrs. Sarah Albee, born August 8, 1825; died August 21, 1909.

Frederick Hanson, died March 31, 1911.

Henry Deters, died April 4, 1911.

Mrs. Sarah Lapham, born May 28, 1834; died April 24, 1911.

*Mrs. Levi Lincoln Lapham b. Apr. 11, 1829 d. Jan. 2 / 1916*

















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